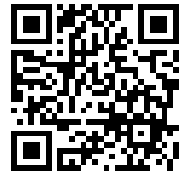


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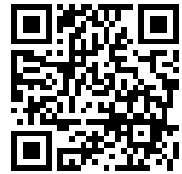


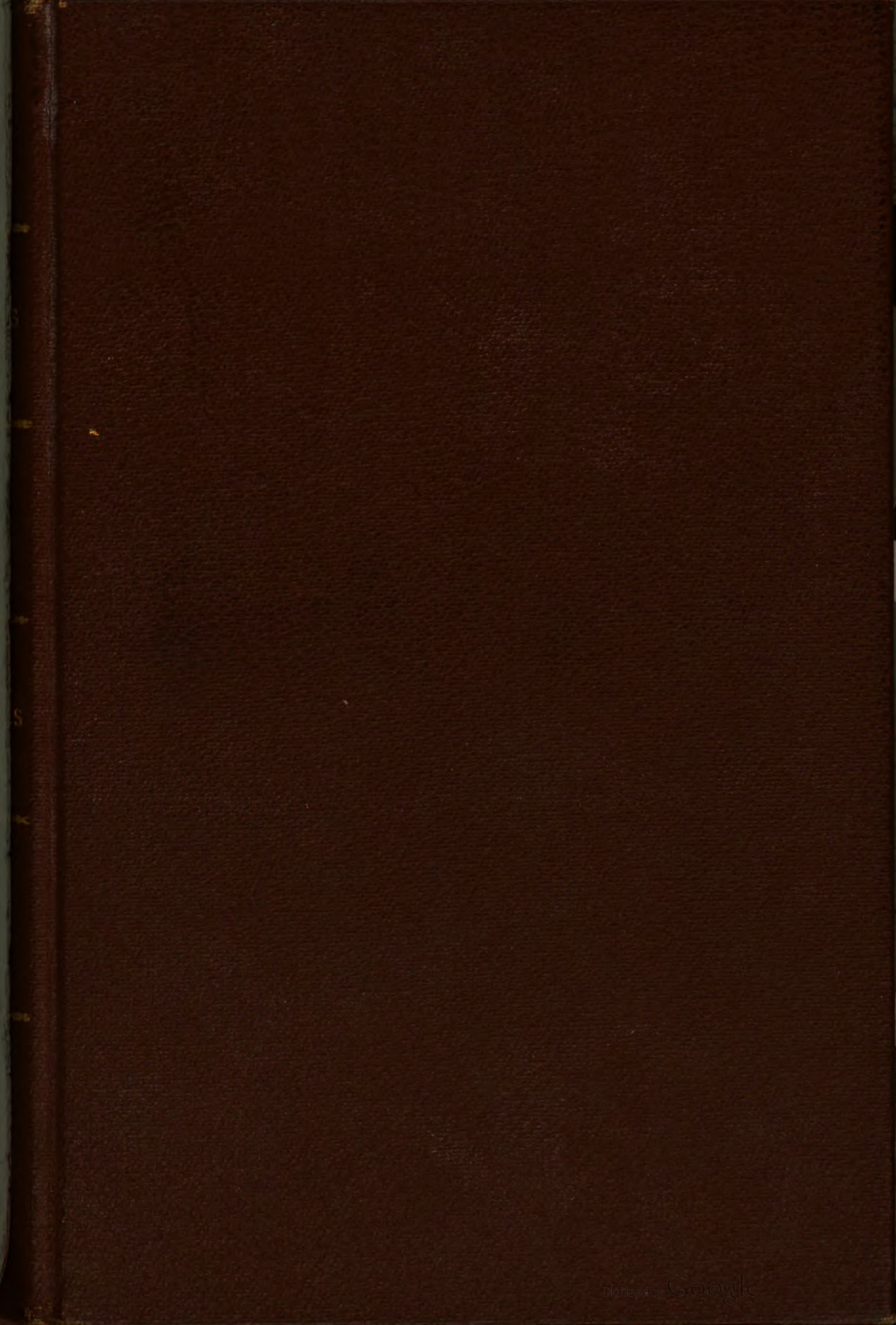
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# LYDGATE'S FALL OF PRINCES

EDITED BY  
HENRY BERGEN

PART II.  
(Books III-V.)



THE CARNEGIE INSTITUTION OF WASHINGTON  
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LYDGATE'S FALL OF PRINCES

PART II.

BOOKS III.-V.



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# THE FALL OF PRINCES



## BOOK III.

### [ Prologue.]

**L**IK a pilgrym which that goth on foote, [p. 144]  
 And hath non hors to releue his trauaile,  
 Hot, drie [&] wery, & fynde may no boote  
 Off welle cold, whan thrust hym doth assaile,  
 Wyn nor licour, that may to hym auaille,  
 Riht so fare I, which in my besynesse  
 No socour fynde my rudnesse to redresse.

Like a pilgrym  
 who goes wearily  
 on foot and finds  
 no spring to still  
 his thirst, so fare  
 I, knowing no  
 help for my  
 rudeness.

I meene as thus: I ha[ue] no fressh licour  
 Out off the conduitis off Calliope,  
 Nor thoruh Clio in rethorik no flour  
 In my labour for to refresshe me,  
 Nor off the sustren, in noubre thries thre,  
 Which with Cithera on Pernaso duell, —  
 Thei neuer me gaff drynk onys off ther well!

8 I have no fresh  
 water from the  
 fountain of  
 Calliope, no  
 flower of speech  
 from Clio to  
 refresh my  
 labour. Not  
 12 once have I  
 drunk of the  
 well on  
 Parnassus.

Nor off ther sprynges cleer & cristallyne,  
 That sprang be touchyng off the Pegase,  
 The fauour lakkith my making tenlumyne,  
 I fynde ther bawme off so gret scarsete,  
 To tame ther tunnyys with sum drope of plente;  
 For Poliphemus thoruh his gret blyndnesse  
 Hath in me dirked off Argus the bryhtnesse.

The blindness of  
 Polyphemus has  
 16 darkened my  
 eye.

Our liff heer short, off wit the gret dulnesse,  
 The heuy soule troublid with trauaile,  
 And off memorie\* the glacyng brotilnesse, —  
 Dreed & onkunnyng ha[ue] maad a strong bataile  
 With werynesse my sperit to assaile,  
 And with ther subtil crepyng in most queynte  
 Ha[ue] maad my sperit in making for to feynte. 28

Our life here is  
 short: wit is  
 dull and memory  
 untrustworthy.  
 24 Dread and  
 Ignorance have  
 crept in to  
 weaken my will  
 to write,

4. welle] wellis H.

7. No] None R.

9. conduitis] conductis R.

17. The] Ther R — making] fauour H.

24. off] om. R — memoire B.

and my step-  
mother Oblivion  
has made a  
bastille of forget-  
fulness to shadow  
my reason and  
cause me to lose  
my way.

And ouermor, the feerful frowardnesse  
Off my stepmoeder callid oblyuyoun,  
Hath maad a bastille off foryetilnesse,  
To stoppe the passage & shadwe my resoun, 32  
That I myht haue no cleer direccioun  
In trāslatyng off newe to quikke me,  
Stories to write off old antiquite.

Thus I stood  
in double doubt,  
between the  
desire to con-  
-sue my work  
of translating  
and Ignorance,  
who halted my  
pen.

Thus was I set, and stood in double werre 36  
At the meetyng off feerful weies tweyne.  
The ton was this: who-euer list to lere,  
Where-as good[e] will gan me constreyne,  
Bochas taccomplisshe for to do my peyne, 40  
Cam Ignoraunce with a maas off dreede  
Mi penne tarreste; I durst[e] nat procede.

When I con-  
sidered what I  
had undertaken,  
my pen quaked  
at the thought  
that I had almost  
abandoned my  
task;

Thus be my-self remembryng on this book,  
It to translate how I hadde vndirtake, 44  
Ful pale off cheer, astonyd in my look,  
Myn hand gan tremble; my penne I felte quake,  
That disespeired, I hadde almost forsake  
So gret a labour, dreedful & inportable, 48  
It to parfourme I fond my-silff so onable.

and when I saw  
how little I had  
accomplished, I  
stood checkmate  
for fear, like a  
wayfarer over-  
taken by night,

Twen the residue off this gret iourne  
And litil part theroff that was begunne,  
I stood chekmaat for feer whan I gan see 52  
In my weie how litil I hadde runne;  
Lik taman that failed day & sunne,  
And hadde no liht taccomplisshe his viage,  
So ferr I stood a-bak in my passage. 56

which came on,  
darkened by  
ignorance.  
I found no one  
to help me but  
the Pierides and  
Medusa, hard  
as stone.

The nyht cam on, dirked with ignorauce,  
Mi witt was dull be cleernesse to discerne  
In rethorik for lak off suffisaunce,  
The torchis out, & queynt was the lanterne. 60  
And in this caas my stile to gouerne,  
Me to forthre I fond non other muse  
But, hard as ston, Pierides and Meduse.

Poverty ap-  
proached and  
old age: my  
purse was  
empty, and  
Bacchus  
far away.

Support was non my dulnesse for to guie; 64  
Pouert approachid; in stal crokid age:  
Mercurie absent and Philologie;  
Mi purs ay liht and void off al coignage.

29. ferdful R. 31. bastille] bataile H, batell R 3.

35. antiquite] auctorite H. 39. gan] can H.

66. Philologie] philosophie H.



Bachus ferr off to glade my corage;  
 An ebbe off plente; scarsete atte fulle,  
 Which of an old man makth the sperit dulle.

68

But hope & trust to putte away despair  
 Into my mynde off newe gan hem dresse;  
 And cheeff off all to make the wethir fair,  
 Mi lordis fredam and bounteuos largesse  
 Into myn herte brouht in such gladnesse,  
 That thoruh releuyng off his benygne grace,  
 Fals Indigence list me no mor manace.

76

But hope rose  
 again and the  
 weather bright-  
 ened, when my  
 lord's generosity  
 brought me  
 gladness and  
 relief.

A, how it is an hertli reioishyng  
 To serue a prynce that list to aduertise  
 Off ther seruautis the feithful iust menyng,  
 And list considre to guerdone ther seruise.  
 And at a neede list hem nat despise,  
 But from al daunger that sholde hem noye or greue  
 Been euer redi to helpe hem and releue.

84

80

Ah, it is a  
 pleasure to  
 serve a prince  
 who is ready  
 to reward and  
 help those who  
 are dependent  
 upon him!

And thus releued be the goodliheed,  
 And thoruh the noblesse off this most knyhtli man,  
 Alle mystis cleerid off disespeir & dreed,  
 Trust, hope and feith into myn herte ran;  
 And on my labour anon forthwith I gan:  
 For be cleer support off my lordis grace,  
 Al foreyn lettyng fro me I dede enchace.

[p. 145]

88

The mists of  
 despair and  
 dread vanished,  
 and I forthwith  
 began my  
 labour.

¶ Folkis that vse to make grete viages,  
 Which vndirfonge long trauaile & labour,  
 Whan thei ha[ue] doon gret part off ther passages,  
 Off werynesse tasswage ther rigour,  
 Ageyn feyntise to fynde sum fauour,  
 Looke ofte ageyn, parcell to be releued,  
 To seen how moch ther iourne is a-cheued.

92

96

People who  
 make long  
 journeys or  
 undertake  
 laborious tasks,  
 often look back  
 to see how much  
 they have  
 accomplished,

Cause whi thei so ofte looke ageyn,  
 Bakward turne look and eek visage,  
 Is onli this: that it may be seyn  
 To them how moch is doon off ther viage.  
 Eek weri folk that gon on pilgrymage  
 Reste hem sumwhile a ful large space,  
 Laborious soot to wipen from ther face.

100

104

and weary folk  
 who go on  
 pilgrimages  
 sometimes stop  
 to take a long  
 rest,

69. An] And R.

105. soot] swot H, swet R 3, swete P.

casting down  
their heavy  
burdens and  
drinking at cool  
springs and  
reckoning up the  
miles they have  
travelled.

Ther heuy fardell among thei caste down  
At certeyn boundis to do ther bakkis ese,  
At wellis colde eek off entencioun 108  
Drynke fressh watris ther greuou thrust tapese,  
Or holsum wyne ther appetit to plesse,  
Reknynge the miles be computaciouns,  
Which thei ha[ue] passid, off castellis & off touns. 112

It comforts them  
to know how  
much of their  
journey is over;

It doth hem ese the noumbre for to knowe  
Sithe thei began off many gret iournees,  
Off hih[e] mounteyns and off valis lowe,  
And straunge sihtes passyng be cuntrees, 116  
Thunkouth bildyng off burwes & citees,  
Countyng the distaunce fro toun[e]s & the spacis:  
This ther talkyng at ther restyng placis.

and they also  
look forward to  
see what still lies  
before them.

The residue and the surplusage 120  
Thei rekne also off ther labour komyng,  
Thynke it is a maner auantage  
To haue & seen a cleer[e] knowlechyng  
Off thynges passid & thynges eek folwyng; 124  
For to ther hertis it doth ful gret plesaunce,  
Whan al such thyng is put in remembraunce.

Thus did John  
Bochas, and he  
was astonished  
when he con-  
sidered the Fall  
of Princes from  
Fortune's wheel,

And semblabli Iohn Bochas, as I fynde,  
Gan turne his bak, look and c[o]untenaunce, 128  
And to remembre, apoyntyng in his mynde  
To the stories rehersed in substauce  
In his too bookis off sorwe & displesaunce,  
Hymself astonyd, merueilyng a gret deel 132  
The fall off pryncis fro Fortunys wheel.

knowing that  
they had brought  
their misfor-  
tunes upon  
themselves  
through excessive  
ambition and  
covetousness.

Off ther onhapp, as he doth reherce,  
Toward hemsilff the cause doth rebounde;  
Ther clymyng up the heuenes for to perce, 136  
In worldli richesse tencrecen and habounde,  
Ther gredi etik doth hemsilff confounde;  
And ther thrust off hauyng onstaunchable  
Caused ther noblesse to be so variable. 140

High climbing up  
blunts the sight  
and causes men  
to fall; and those  
who covet too  
much shall lose  
everything.

Hih clymyng up, off resoun who can see,  
Dulleth off braynes the memoriall,  
Blunteth the sihte, in hih & low degre,  
Which from a-loffte makith hem haue a fall. 144

112. 2nd off] *om.* H.

116. be] the R. 117. burwes] Bourhes R.

118. distaunçis H.

143. &] or H.

Men seyn off old, who that coueitith all,  
At onset hour suchon shal nat chese,  
But al his gadryng attonys he shal lese.

For worldli folk which so hih arise  
With the gret peis off worldli habundaunce,  
And with the weihte off froward couetise, —  
Namli wher Fortune holdeth the ballaunce, —  
With onwar turn off sum onhappi chaunce,  
This stormy queen, this double fals goddess,  
Plungeth hem doun from al ther gret richesse.

148 Fortune is  
always ready  
to plunge  
worldly folk  
down from  
their riches.

152

Wherefore Bochas heeroff to make a preeff  
Sheweth to purpos a sentence ful notable,  
A cleer example off onwar such myscheeff,  
Write off an auctour be maner off a fable,  
Al-be the menyng be ful comendable,  
And weel accordyng in conclusioun  
To the cleer purpos off this entencioun.

156 Therefore  
Bochas tells a  
fable to shew  
how such un-  
expected mis-  
chief comes.

160

### ¶ Finis Prologi.

#### [Incipit liber Tercius]

[How Andalus doctor of Astronomey concludith/  
how princys sholdenot atwite constellacions nor  
fortune of their vnhappy fallyng but their owne  
demeritys and vicious lyuyng.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**T Naples whilom, as he doth speciefie,  
In his youthe whan he to scoole went,  
Ther was a doctour off astronomie,  
Famous off cunnyng & riht excellent.  
Off hym rehersyng, shortli in sentement,  
His ioie was most to studyen and to wake;  
And he was callid Andalus the blake.  
He radde in schoolis the meuyng off the heuene,  
The kynde off steris and constellaciouns,  
The cours also off the planetis seuene,  
Ther influencis and ther mocions,  
And heeld also in his opynyouns,  
The fall off pryncis, the cause weel out souht,  
Cam off themsilff & off Fortune nouht.

164 When Bochas  
went to school  
in Naples there  
was a doctor of  
astronomy called  
Andalus the  
Black, who  
understood the  
course of the  
stars and be-  
lieved that the  
Fall of Princes  
was caused by  
themselves alone  
and not by  
Fortuna.

172

154. gret] om. R. 156. ful] most H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 60 verso.

He held that  
neither the stars  
nor heaven are  
to blame for  
earthly misfor-  
tunes,

Nor the sterris wer nothyng to wite, 176  
Be ther meuyng nor be ther influence,  
Nor that men sholde off riht the heuene atwite  
For no froward worldli violence:

For this clerk ther concluded in sentence, 180  
How men be vertu longe may contune  
From hurt off sterris outhur off Fortune.

of which the chief  
occasion is the  
viciousness of  
men, who have  
free choice to  
behave either  
well or ill.

Ther owne desert is cheeff occasioun  
Off the onhap, who-so taketh heede, 184  
And ther demeritis onwarli put hem doun,  
Whan vicious liff doth ther bridil leede.  
Cours off Fortune nor off the sterris rede  
Hyndrith nothyng geyn ther felicite, 188  
Sithe off fre chois thei ha[ue] ful liberte.

God punishes  
sin in many  
ways; evil-doing  
always calls for  
retribution.

God punsheth synne in many maner wise;  
Summe he chastisith for ther owne auail:  
Men may off resoun in such cas deuisse, 192  
Synne ay requereth vengau[n]ce at his tail.  
God off Fortune taketh no counsail,

As for Fortune,  
no one is more  
independent of  
her than Glad  
Poverty, as  
Andalus used  
to say,  
relating to his  
pupils this fable.

Nor from hir meuyng no man is mor fre,  
As clerkis write,\* than is Glad Pouerte. 196

And onto purpos, this auctour ful notable,  
To his scoleris ther beyng in presence,  
Ful demurli gan rehearse a fable,  
With many a colour off sugred eloquence; 200  
Theron concludyng the summe off his sentence  
Touchyng a striff, which he dede expresse,  
Atwen Glad Pouert & this blynd goddesse.

[A disputacion between fortune & glad pouert.]<sup>1</sup>

Once Glad  
Poverty, who  
looked like a  
dishevelled,  
tattered woman,  
sat where three  
roads met.

**Q**VOD Andalus: "Whilom off fortune 204  
In a streiht place ther sat Glad Pouerte,  
Which resemblid off look & figure

A rekles woman, most ougli on to see,  
At a naruh meetyng off hih-weies thre, 208  
Al to torn, to-raggid and to-rent,  
A thousand pachchis vpon hir garnement.

178. atwite] awyte R. 180. concludyng H.  
188. Hyndryng R — ther] the R.  
196. writen B. 203. this] his H.  
209. to-raggid] & raggid H.  
210. garment R, garmente P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 60 verso.

She was hidous bothe off cheer and face,  
 And in semyng void off sorwe and dreed.  
 And bi that way as Fortune dede pace,  
 And off Glad Pouert sodenli took heed,  
 She gan to smyle & lauhhe at hir in deed,  
 Bi a maner scornynge in certeyn,  
 Off hir array she hadde so gret disdeyn.

212 She was very unattractive, but without sorrow or fear; and when Fortune happened to come along and caught sight of her, Fortune began to laugh at her ragged clothes.

Whos froward lauhltre, whan Pouert dede espie  
 How she off hir hadde indignacioun,  
 She roos hire up off hih malencolie,  
 Pleynli to shewe hire entencioun,  
 Withoute good day or salutacioun,  
 Doyng to Fortune no maner reuerence,  
 Vnder these wordis declaryng hir sentence:

220 At this Poverty arose indignantly, and without bidding Fortune good-day said:

¶ 'O thou Fortune, most fool off foolis all,  
 What cause hastow for to lauhhe at me,  
 Or what disdeyn is in thyn herte fall?  
 Spare neueradeel, tell on, lat me see,  
 For I ful litil haue a-do with the;  
 Off old nor newe I ha[ue] noon aqueyntaunce  
 Nouter with the nor with thi gouernaunce.'

224 "O Fortune, greatest of all fools, why do you laugh at me? We have very small acquaintance with one another."

And whan Fortune beholdeth the maneer  
 Off Glad Pouert in hir totorn[e] weede,  
 And kneuh also be contenaunce & cheer,  
 How she off hire took but litil heede,  
 Lik as she hadde to hir no maner neede, —  
 The which[e] thynges conceyued and Iseyn,  
 To Pouerte she anserde thus ageyn:

232 Fortune saw that Glad Poverty had little respect for her and answered:

¶ 'Mi scornful\* lauhltre pleynli was for the,  
 Whan I the sauh so megre, pale and leene,  
 Nakid and cold, in gret aduersite,  
 Scabbid, scuruy, scallid and oncleene  
 On bak and body, as it is weel seene.  
 Many a beeste walke in ther pasture,  
 Which day be day off newe thou doost recure.

236 "I laughed when I saw you so thin and pale and cold, so scurvy and unclean. You dwell in the fields

211. She] Scho R.  
 228. neueradeel] not adeel J, not a dele P.  
 234. know R.  
 236. hadde] om. R.  
 239. scornful] soruhful B.  
 243. and] om. R.

and have nothing  
to wrap your head  
in but a piece of  
old matting.  
Children run  
when they see  
you, and many  
a dog has  
gnawed on  
your staff.

Hauyng nothyng to wrappyn in thyn hed [p. 148]  
Sauf a brod hat, rent out off nattis olde,  
Ful offten hungri for defaute off bred, 248  
Slepyng on straw[e] in the frostis colde.  
And wher thou comest, as men may weel beholde,  
For feer off the, childe them withdrawe,  
And many a dogge hath on thi staff ignawe. 252

"You are  
odious to all  
men; everybody  
flees your  
presence."

To alle estatis thou art most odious,  
Men with the will ha[ue] no daliaunce,  
Thi felaship is so contrarious,  
Wher thou abidest ther may be no plesauce. 256  
Folk hate so dedli thi froward aqueyntaunce,  
That fynali, I dar conclude off the,  
Wher-euer thou comest thi felaship men fle!

When Glad  
Poverty saw how  
rude Fortune  
was to her, she  
replied:

Whan Glad Pouert gan pleynli vndirstonde 260  
These rebukes rehersed off Fortune,  
The rud[e] resouns that she took on honde,  
Which frowardli to hire she dede entune,  
As Pouert were a refus in comune, 264  
Bi the repreuis that Fortune on hir laide;  
For which Pouert replied ageyn & saide:

"Fortune, be  
well certain that  
I have renounced  
your favour of  
my own free will.  
I would rather  
be poor and  
happy than  
possess great  
wealth and have  
no peace of  
mind."

¶ 'Fortune,' quod she, 'touchyng this debat,  
Which off malice thou doost ageyn me take, 268  
Be weel certeyn, touchyng my poore estat,  
I off fre will thi fauour ha[ue] forsake.  
And thouh folk seyn thou maist men riche make,  
Yit I ha[ue] leuere be poore with gladnesse, 272  
Than with trouble possede gret richesse.

"Although you  
make a fine  
appearance and  
look fat and  
well fed"

For thouh thou seeme benygne & debonaire  
Bi a maner countirfet apparence,  
Fat & weel fed, with rounde chekis faire, 276  
With many colours off trouthe as in pretence,  
As ther off feith wer werrai existence, —  
But vnder all thi flouris off freshnesse  
The serpent glidith, off chaung & doubilnesse. 280

and wear purple  
clothes and  
have many  
servants and  
jewels, neverthe-  
less I am quite  
ready to fight  
you."

And thouh thi clothyng be of purpil hewe,  
With gret awaityng off many chaumbereris,  
Off gold & perle ech dai chaunges newe,  
Clothes off gold & sondry fressh atiris, 284  
And in thyn houshold ful many officeris, —

271. maist] may H.

Yit I dar weel putte in iupartie,  
With the to plete and holde chaumpartie.'

Thus Glad Pouert gan wexen inportune,  
Off cheer contraire, off look & off language,  
Ageyn this ladi which callid is Fortune,  
That off disdeyn she fill into a rage:  
¶ 'Behold,' quod she, 'off Pouert the corage,  
In wrechidnesse standyng disconsolat,  
How ageyn me she is now obstynat!

288 Fortune then  
lost her temper  
and said:  
"Behold the  
presumption of  
this wretched  
creature, she  
cannot

292

She cannat see, how she stant outraied,  
Fer from the fauour off my felicite,  
Yit off pride she is nat disamaied,  
Nor\* list nat bowwe for tobeie me,  
Thouh she be cast in mendicite,  
Ferthest a-bak, I do you weel assure,  
In myscheeff set off any creature.

296 see how misera-  
ble she is with-  
out my fauour,  
and yet she is  
full of pride!

300

But treuli, Pouert, for al thi truaundise,  
Maugre thi pride and thi gret outrage,  
I shal the pun[y]she in ful cruel wise,  
To make the loute vnder my seruage.  
Which resembest a dedli pale ymage,  
That were off newe rise out off his graue,  
And yit off pride darst ageyn me rauc.'

304 "Truly, Poverty,  
for all your  
outrageous conceit,  
I'll punish you  
and make you bow  
down in my service.  
You look as if  
you had just  
risen from the  
grave!"

308

But whan Fortune hadde these woordis said,  
Glad Pouert gan falle in gret gladnesse,  
And ageyn Fortune with a sodeyn braid,  
She gan hir conceit out shewe & expresse:  
¶ 'Fortune,' quod she, 'thouh thou be a goddessse  
Callid off foolis, yit lerne this off me,  
From thi seruage I stonde at liberte.

312 On hearing this  
Glad Poverty re-  
joiced and said:  
"Fortune, if  
fools call you a  
goddess, I, at  
any rate, am free  
from your sub-  
jection; and  
since we are  
going to fight,  
it is comforting  
to know that  
you have no  
firmness of  
heart.

316

But yiff I shal algatis haue a-doo  
With the in armis, most cruel & vengable,  
Touchyng the quarel that is atwen vs too,  
Ther is o thyng to me riht comfortable,  
That thi corage is flekeryng & onstable;  
And wher an herte is in hymself deuyded,  
Victorie in armys for hym is nat prouyded.

320

288. Importune R, H. 289. contrary H.

298. Nor] Nar B— for] om. H.

303. gret] om. J.

318. that] which H— atwen] tween J.

"I won't flatter you, although flattery is appropriate to your kind: I have freely forsaken worldly wealth,  
 Me list[e] nouter flatre the nor fage,  
 Nor the tenoynte be adulacioun, 324  
 Thouth flat[e]rie & feyned fals language  
 Approprid be to thi condicioun;  
 And in despit off thi presumpcioun,  
 I ha[ue] forsake off my fre volunte 328  
 All the tresours off worldli vanite.

and if once your servant, I am now emancipated from your power.  
 Whilom I was, as thou hast deuised, [p. 149]  
 Seruant to the, and onto thi tresours;  
 But fro thi daunger now that I am fraunchised, 332  
 Sekyng off the nouter helpe nor socours,  
 Manace kynges & myhti emperours:  
 For Glad Pouert, late nouter soone,  
 With thi richessis hath nothyng to doone. 336

"You may hold worldly princes and rich merchants in subjection, Glad Poverty has wholly escaped your lure.  
 For thouth thou haue enbracid in thi cheyne  
 Worldli pryncis & goodes transitorie,\*  
 And riche marchantis vnder thi demeyne,  
 Yeuest to knythod conquest and victorie,\* 340  
 The fadyng palme off laude & veynglorie,\* —  
 But whan echon thi fauour han recurid,  
 Than is Glad Pouert fre fro thi lure assurid.

"All your servants stand in fear of your deceit; Glad Poverty alone is free.  
 All thi seruantis standen vnder dreede, 344  
 Quakyng for feer[e] off thi doubilnesse;  
 For nouter wisdam, force nor manheede,  
 Fredam, bounte, loue nor ientillesse  
 Mai in thi fauour ha[ue] no sekirnesse; 348  
 Thei be so possid with wyndis in thi barge,  
 Wher-as Glad Pouert goth freli at his large.

"Desiring nothing, I am not afraid of your menaces.  
 Thi manacyng doth me no duresse,  
 Which worldli pryncis dredyn euerichon. 352  
 Thei may weel quake for losse off gret richesse;  
 But I, Glad Pouert, theroff desire non,  
 As flowe & ebbe al worldli thyng mut gon;  
 For afftir flodis off Fortunys tyde, 356  
 The ebbe folweth, & will no man abide.

324. tonoynte R.

331. onto] to R.

338. transitoires B, R, J, transytoryes H 5, transitories P.

340. victoires B, R, J, victories P, victoryes H 5.

341. veyngloires B, R, J, vainglories P, veyngloryes H 5.

347. gentillesse R, H, gentlenes P. 348. Mai] Man R.

349. wynde R.

355. worldli] ertthly H.



Flowe and ebbe be to me bothe aliche;  
 I dreede nothyng thi mutabilite,  
 Mak whom thou list[e] outhere poore or riche; 360  
 For I nothyng will requere off the,  
 Nouthere lordshepe nor gret prosperite:  
 For with thi gifftes who that hath to doone,  
 Off chaunges braideth offer than the moone. 364

Out off pouert cam first these emperours  
 That were in Rome crownyd with laurer;  
 Fredam & largesse made hem first victours,  
 Causyng ther fame to shyne briht and cleer, 368  
 Till couetise brouht hem in daunger,  
 Whan thei off foli, in ther most excellence,  
 To thi doubilnesse dede reuerence.

For whan fredam a prynce doth forsake,  
 And couetise put awei largesse,  
 And streitnesse is into houshold take,  
 And negardship exilith ientillesse,  
 Than is withdrawe from ther hih noblesse 376  
 The peeplis herte; and, pleyntli to deuise,  
 Off ther seruauantis farweel al good seruise.

Al such sodeyn chaungis in comune  
 In this world vsid now fro day to day,  
 Echon thei come be fraude off fals Fortune;  
 Experience hath put it at assay, 380  
 Loue, trouthe & feith be gon [so] ferr away.  
 And yiff that trust with pryncis wil nat tarie,  
 Litol merueile thouh the peeple varie. 384

For thoruh thi chaungis off fraudulent fairnesse,  
 Ther is now vsid in eueri regioun  
 Glad cheer out shewed with couert doubilnesse, 388  
 Vnder the courtyn off symulacioun.  
 So secre now is adulacioun,  
 That in this world may be no sur[e]te,  
 But yiff it reste in Glad Pouerte. 392

Yit off thi pereinous froward variaunce  
 I sette no stor, treuli as for me;  
 For al thi frenship concludeth with myschaunce,  
 With sodeyn myscheeff off mutabilite, 396  
 Which yeueth me herte to haue a-do with the:

"Flow and ebb  
of fortune are  
like to me.  
Do as you will  
with others; I  
ask nothing of  
you.

"The emperors  
of Rome first  
arose out of  
poverty, nor did  
they fall until  
they became  
covetous and  
worshiped you.

"When a  
prince becomes  
avaricious he  
loses the love of  
his people;

and sudden  
changes are to be  
expected when  
the honour of  
princes has de-  
parted.

"Owing to you,  
people every-  
where dissem-  
ble; there is no  
surety except  
in Glad Poverty.

"I have no fear  
of your  
froward incon-  
stancy:  
my poor estate  
is quite safe  
from your  
vicissitudes."

358. be] om. R. 375. gentliness H.  
383. so] om. J, R. 390. secret H. 397. me] my R.

For suffisaunce in my poore estaat  
Shal to thi chaunges seyn sodenli chekmaat.'

When she heard  
this Fortune  
was furious.  
"Poverty," she  
said, "if I did  
not show you  
my power men  
would think but  
little of me.

Fortune almost with anger disespeired, 400  
Off these woordis took ful gret greuauance.  
¶ 'Pouert,' quod she, 'which maist nat been apeired!  
But I now shewe ageyn the my puissaunce,  
Men wolde litil accounte my substauance, 404  
O myhti Pouert! O stronge Hercules!  
Which ageyn[s] me putttest thi-silff in pres!

"Do you  
suppose  
that you can  
overcome me, O  
strong Hercules?  
I, who am called  
Princess of  
Conquest and  
Arms!"

Supposest thou it sholde the auaille,  
Outher be force or be hardynesse 408  
To haue a-do with me in bataile,  
Which am off conquest & off hih prowesse  
In armys callid ladi and pryncesse?  
For ther is non so myhti conquerour, 412  
That may preuaile withoute my fauour.'

Poverty replied:  
"Although I  
have neither  
weapons nor  
armour, let us  
see if you dare  
wrestle with me.

¶ Off these woordis Pouert nothyng afferd, [p. 150]  
Answerde ageyn, thus pleykli in sentence:  
'Thouh heer I ne\* haue spere, sheeld nor suerd, 416  
Nor chosen armour to stonden at diffence,  
Pollex nor dagger to make resistence,  
But bare and naked, anon it shal be seyn,  
Wher thou with me darst wrastlen on this pleykn. 420

under the con-  
dition that  
neither of us  
shall withdraw,  
and that the  
victor may bind  
the other to  
obey his will."

Which shal be doon vnder condicioun  
That non off vs shal hym silff withdrawe,  
But stille abide off entencioun,  
Till he that venquysshe ordeyned hath a lawe, 424  
Such as hym likith, ageyn[e]s his felawe.  
The which[e] lawe shal nat be delaied  
To be acomplisshid on hym that is outraied.'

At this Fortune  
began to smile:  
"Who shall be  
judge between  
us?"

Off whos woordes Fortune ageyn gan smyle, 428  
That Pouert proffred so proudli to assaile.  
And vpon this she stynte a litil while,  
And to Pouert she putte this opposale:  
¶ 'Who shal,' quod she, 'be iuge off this bataile, 432  
Or yeue a doom iustli atwen vs tweyne  
Off this quarell which we shal darreyne?

416. heer I ne] I heer B, R, P. 417. stonde in at R.

420. Wher] Wheper H — on] in R.

424. venquyssith H — haue H.

434. Off] on H, R 3.

I axe also a-nother questioun  
 Touchyng thi profre off furious outrage:  
 Wher-as thou putttest a condicioun  
 And a lawe with ful proud language, —  
 Wher shaltow fynden pleggis or hostage  
 To keepe the promys which thou doost ordeyne, 440  
 Theroff tabide the guerdoun or the peyne?  
 I meene as thus: yiff ther be set a lawe  
 Atween vs too or a condicioun  
 Be sur[e]te, which may nat be withdrawe,  
 As vnder bond or obligacioun;  
 But there is nouthere lawe nor resoun  
 May bynde a beggere, yiff it be weel souht,  
 Whan it is preued that he hath riht nouht. 444  
 Thi sect off pouert hath a proteccioun  
 From all statutis to gon at liberte,  
 And from al lawe a pleyn exempcioun:  
 Than folweth it, yiff thou bounde the  
 To any lawe that may contreuid be,  
 It wer fraude, pleynli to endite,  
 Which hast riht nouht thi parti to aquite. 448  
 Thou art so feeble, yiff it cam therto,  
 That thou were brouht onto vttraunce,  
 For noun power, whan al that wer do,  
 Thou sholdist faile to make thi fynauce,  
 Bothe destitut off good and off substauce;  
 And sithe no lawe thi persone may coarte,  
 It wer foli with suchon to iupart. 450  
 Yiff I wolde compulse the to wrak,  
 Taxe off the the tresour off kyng Darie,  
 On that parti thou stondest ferr abak,  
 Mi paiement so longe sholde tarie,  
 Indigence wolde make the to varie. 452  
 And yiff I wolde thi persone eek compare  
 To Alisandre, — thi sides been ful bare!  
 And fynali thou stondest in such caas  
 Off miserie, wrechidnesse and neede,  
 That thou myhtest off resoun seyn\* allas,  
 Bothe forsake off frenshipe & kenreede,  
 And ther is non dar plegge the for dreede. 456  
 "And if I win,  
 where will you  
 find surety to  
 keep your  
 promise?"  
 "If a condition  
 be set between  
 us, how can  
 a beggar, who  
 has nothing, be  
 bound to keep  
 it?"  
 "Your sect of  
 Poverty goes  
 free of all law; it  
 would be a  
 fraud for you  
 to bind your-  
 self without  
 having any  
 security."  
 "And as you are  
 destitute, and  
 exempt from  
 all penalties, it  
 were folly to  
 have ado with  
 you."  
 "I should have  
 to wait a long  
 time before I  
 got anything out  
 of you!"  
 "Miserable and  
 without friends  
 or kin, no one  
 would stand  
 472 surety for  
 you; yet, like a  
 vainglorious  
 fool, you expect  
 to win."

449. Thi] The P — sect] feet R.

472. seyn] syngen B, syng R, synge J, sing P, say R 3.

473. &] & of H.

- Yit lik a fool supprisid with veynglorie,  
Hopest off me to wyinne the victorie.' 476
- Said Glad Poverty, "I have no doubt what-  
ever that I shall  
win. Nor do I  
ask any pledge  
of you, except  
that you will  
promise to fight  
to a finish." ¶ Quod Glad Pouert, 'I doute neueradeel  
That the victorie\* shal passen on my side.  
Plegge & hostages, lat hem go farweel!  
I axe no mor off al thi grete pride, 480  
But to the eende that thou wilt abide.  
Plegge thi feith, al-be that sum men\* seith,  
To truste in Fortune ther is ful litil feith.
- "And as I have no security to  
offer except my  
body, you can  
take that and  
keep it in prison  
for ever if you  
have the victory." And for my part, in this hih emprise, 484  
Sithe I ha[ue] pleggis nouthen on nor tweyne,  
Mor sur hostage can I nat deuisse,  
But yiff so be the victorie\* thou atteyne,  
Than yelde my bodi bounden in a cheyne, 488  
Perpetueli, lik the condicioun,  
With the tabide fettrid in prisoun.'
- Fortune laughed more than ever.  
"It is contrary  
to nature for  
a beggar to have  
such a bold  
heart!" Than Fortune louh mor than she dede afforn,  
Whan she sauh Pouert so presumptuous; 492  
In hir\* arrai al ruggid and totorn,  
And hadde nouthen rente, lond nor hous.  
'It is,' quod she, 'a thyng contrarious  
Onto nature, who that can aduerte, 496  
To a beggere to haue a sturdi herte.
- "And if I conquer you, of what use  
would it be to  
me to keep  
your empty  
belly full  
in prison?" And yiff that I the venquissid in bataile, [p.151]  
It were to me no worshepe nor auantage,—  
What sholde thi bodi onto me auaille, 500  
The tenprisowne streihtli in a cage?  
It sholde been a charge and a costage,  
Thyn empti wombe ech day to fulfill,  
Yiff thou myhtest haue\* vitaille at thi will! 504
- "If I were to lead you in  
triumph behind  
my chariot, men  
would say,  
'Look at that  
fool, who has  
conquered a  
beggar!'" And yiff I wolde my-silff to magnefie,  
Tokne off tryumphe afftir my char the leede,  
Men wolde deeme it a maner moquerie,  
And seyn in scorn: 'tak off that fool good heede, 508  
How he a beggere hath ouercome in deede,  
Fauht with hym for to encrece his name,  
Which conquest turneth to his disclandre & shame!'

478. victoire B. 482. summen B.

483. litil] om. R.

487. victoire B. 493. hir] his B, R, J — ruggid] ragged  
R 3, H 5, to ragged P, rogged R.

504. han B.

511. sclandre &amp; diffame R 3.

Yit whan I haue brouht the to vtraunce,  
 Mi power shewed and my grete myht,  
 And thyn outrage oppressid bi vengauce, —  
 Afftir al this, as it is skile and riht,  
 It shal be kouth in eueri manys siht,  
 Out declarid the gret[e] difference  
 Twen thi feblesse\* & my gret excellence.

512 "At any rate,  
 after I have  
 beaten you  
 everybody will  
 see the great  
 difference be-  
 tween us, and  
 then I'll let  
 516 Orcus tear you  
 in pieces to shew  
 my power."

Than to represe thi surquedie attonys,  
 Cruel Orchus, the teidogge infernall,  
 Shal reende thi skyn assonder fro thi bonys,  
 To shewe my power, which is imperiall,  
 And to declare in especiall,  
 Pouert recleymed onto Pridis lure,  
 With me to plete may no while endure.'

520

524

And sodenli, or Glad Pouert took heed,  
 Fortune proudli first began tassaile;  
 And onwarli hent hire bi the hed,  
 Demyng off pride, that she may nat faile  
 Thoruh hir power to venquysshe this bataile.  
 But it may falle a dwery in his riht  
 Toutraie a geaunt, for al his grete myht.

528

532

With that,  
 Fortune sud-  
 denly seized  
 Glad Poverty by  
 the head,

God taketh non heed to power nor to strengthe,  
 To hih estaat[e] nor to hih noblesse,  
 To squar[e] lemys, forged on breede or lengthe,  
 But to quarelis groundid on rihtwisenesse;  
 For out off wrong may growe no prowesse.  
 For wher that trouthe holdeth chaumpartie,  
 God will his cause be grace magnefie.

536

thinking it  
 would be easy to  
 overcome her.  
 But God always  
 defends the  
 right,

Wherfor Pouert, strong in hir entent,  
 Liht and delyu[e]re, auoid off al fatnesse,  
 Riht weel brethed, & nothyng corpulent,  
 Smal off dieete surfetis to represe,  
 Ageyn Fortune proudli gan hir dresse,  
 And with an ougli, sterne cruel face,  
 Gan in army's hir proudli to embrace.

540

544

and Poverty,  
 thin and active,  
 with an ugly  
 expression on  
 her face,

518. febilnesse B, feebilnesse H, feblenesse R.

520. tei dogge R, Teydogge H, tidogge J, tye dogge P, tey-  
 dogges R 3.

528. hent] tooke H. 531. dwery] dowri R.

539. God] Gog (*blunder*) R. 543. Dietis H.

545. with] om. R.

546. embrace R, H.

grasped Fortune  
around her  
corpulent, short-  
breathed body, Pouert was sclendre & myhte weel endure;  
Fortune was round[e], short off wynd and breth. 548  
And wombes grete oppressid with armure;  
For lak off wynd the grete stuff hem sleth;  
And many a man bryngeth to his deth:  
For ouermekil off any maner thyng 552  
Hath many on brouht to his ondoying.

(for it is much  
better to be  
neither too fat  
nor too lean, and  
sufficiency is  
better than  
superfluity) A mene is best, with good[e] gouernaunce;  
To mekil is nouht, nor ouer-gret plente:  
Gretter richesse is founde in suffisaunce 556  
Than in the flodis off superfluitye.  
And who is content in his pouerte  
And gruchchith nat, for bittir nor for soote,  
What-euer he be, hath Fortune vndir foote, 560

and lifted her up  
in the air, Coueitise put hym in no dispeir, —  
Wherfor Pouert, off herte glad and liht,  
Lefte Fortune ful hih up in the heir,  
And hir constreyned off verai force & myht. 564  
For Glad Pouert off custum and off riht,  
Whan any trouble ageyn hir doth begynne,  
Ay off Fortune the laurer she doth wynne.

and, throwing  
her down, gave  
her such a blow  
over the heart  
with her sharp  
knee, ¶ Maugre Fortune, in the hair alofte 568  
Constreyned she was be Wilful Pouerte,  
That to the erthe hir fal was ful onsoffte:  
For off Pouert the bony sharp[e] kne,  
Sclendre and long & leene vpon to see, 572  
Hitte Fortune with so gret a myht  
Ageyn the herte, she myht nat stande vpriht:

that she could  
not rise.  
(Poverty in  
contentment always  
holds Fortune in  
subjection; To signefie that Pouert with gladnesse,  
Which is content with smal possessioun 576  
And geueth no fors off tresour nor richesse,  
Hath ouer Fortune the dominacioun,  
And kepith hir euer vnder subieccioun,  
Wher worldli folk, with ther riche appaiaile, 580  
Lyue euer in dreed Fortune wolde faile.

poor men can  
sing before  
thieves; it is the  
rich man who is  
afraid.) The poore man affor the theeff doth syng [p. 152]  
Vnder the wodis with fresh notis shrille;  
The riche man, ful feerful off robberyng, 584

553. ondoying] endyng R, R 3.

568. alofte] of lofte R. 570. hir] his R.

583. woode H.

Quakyng for dreed[e], rideth foorth ful stille.  
The poore at large goth wher hym list at wille,  
Strongli fraunchised from al debat and striff;  
The riche afferd alwei to lese his liff.

588

Thus Glad Pouert hath the palme Iwonne, —  
Fortune outraied, for al hir doubilnesse.  
Vpon whom Pouert in haste is ronne,  
And streyned hir with so gret duresse,  
Till she confessid & pleynli dede expresse  
With feith & hand, in al hir gret[e] peyne,  
Tabide what lawe Pouert list ordeyne.

592

Thus Glad  
Poverty won  
the battle and  
punished  
Fortune so  
severely, that  
she promised

And in haste afftir this disconfiture,  
Fortune began to compleyne sore.  
But Glad Pouert, which all thynge myhte endure,  
Charged Fortune scornen hire no more.  
For it was said[e] sithen go ful yore,  
He that reioishith to scorne folk in veyn,  
Whan he wer lothest shal scorned been ageyn.

596

to submit to  
whatever  
penalty Poverty  
imposed on her.

'Yit,' quod Pouert, 'thouh thou were despitous,  
Woordis rehersyng which wer nat faire,  
Straunge rebukis ful contrarious,  
And repreuys many thousand paire,  
Thou shalt me fynde ageynward debonaire:  
For thouh a tunge be sclandrous & vengable,  
To sclandre ageyn is nothyng comendable.

600

604

608

"You must not  
scorn me any  
more," said  
Poverty, "but  
even if you  
did, I would be  
pleasant to you,  
and, in con-  
formity with our  
agreement,

Thou must considre, touchyng our bataile  
The ordynance and imposicioun,  
That which off vs in conquest do preuaile  
To brynge his felawe to subieccioun,  
He shal obeie the statut off resoun,  
And acomplishe, off verai due dette,  
What lawe the victour list vpon hym sette.

612

616

For which thou shalt the said[e] lawe obeie,  
With circumstaunces off the condicioun  
Bi me ordeyned, and nothyng ageyn seie, —  
Make no gruchchyng nor replicacioun.  
'Considred first the fals opynyoun  
Off hem that seyn, al worldli aenture  
Off good and badde abide vnder thi cure, —

620

you must do  
what I com-  
mand with-  
out grumbling.

598. all thynge] *om.* R.

616. vpon] on H — to sette H.

- "So, considering  
 the erroneous  
 idea that all  
 worldly chance is  
 under your  
 control, I shall  
 take Unhappy  
 Adventure from  
 your power.
- Summe poetis and philisophres also  
 Wolde in this caas make the a goddesse, 624  
 Which be deceyued, I dar seyn, bothe too;  
 And ther errour and foli to redresse,  
 I shal withdrawe in verai sekirnesse 628  
 Onhappi Auenture away fro thi power,  
 That she no mor shal stonde in thi daunger.
- "You will have  
 to bind her to a  
 stake where  
 everybody can  
 see her and  
 know that only  
 those who want  
 her need take  
 her with them.
- This lawe off newe vpon the I make,  
 That first thou shalt, al open in sum pleyn, 632  
 Euel Auenture bynden to a stake,  
 Or to sum peler wher she mai be seyn,  
 To shewe exauple to folkis in certeyn,  
 That no man shal loosne hire nor discharge, 636  
 But such as list with hire to gon at large.
- "And you shall  
 harm no men  
 but the fools  
 who trust in  
 you."
- Heeroff to make a declaracioun,  
 Touchyng thi myht off Euel Auenture,  
 Thou shalt forgon thi dominacioun 640  
 To hyndre or harme any creature,  
 But onli foolis, which in thi myht assure.  
 Thei off ther foli may feele gret damage,  
 Nat off thi power, but off ther owne outrage.' 644
- Such wilful  
 wretches who  
 unbind Unhappy  
 Adventure and  
 call her a  
 goddess
- For thilke foolis, which that list onbynde  
 This wrechche callid Onhappi Auenture,  
 Off witt & resoun thei make hemseluen blynde,  
 Lich as the world stood in Fortunys cure, 648  
 As thouth she myhte assure hem & onsure,  
 And hem dispose to welthe or wrechchidnesse, —  
 In ther errour hir callyng a goddesse!
- are blind  
 to God's  
 having given us  
 free choice of  
 good and evil.
- Such wilful wrechchis that hemsilff betake 652  
 To putte ther fredam in hir subieccioun,  
 Off God aboute the power thei forsake,  
 And hem submitte, ageyn[e]s al resoun,  
 Vnder Fortunis transmutacioun, 656  
 Ther liberte ful falsli for to thrall,  
 Namli whan thei a goddesse list hir call.
- With a dirk myst off variacioun  
 Fortune hath cloudid ther cleer natural liht, 660  
 And ouershadwed ther discrecioun,  
 That thei be blent in ther inward siht  
 For to considre and to beholde ariht,

650. dispoise R. 661. And] And hath R.



- How God aboue put vnder mannys cure 664  
Fre chois off good, his resoun to assure.
- The Lord enlumyned off his bounteous  
largesse [p. 153] 668  
With mynde and witt his memoriall,  
Toward al vertu his steppis for to dresse,  
Endued his resoun for to be naturall,  
Off frowardnesse till he wex bestiall,  
To bynde hymself contrariousli in deede  
To serue Fortune, atwixen hope and dreede. 672
- Thus bestiall folk made hire a goddesse,  
Falsli wenyng she myhte hem most auaille  
With hir plentes off habundant richesse;  
And summe demen in ther supposaile, 676  
With onwar chaung she dar the grete assaile,  
Whos trust[e] alwei medlid is with trouble,  
And hir plesaunce includith menyng double.
- And summe afferme that she mai auaunce 680  
Conquestis grete and disconfitures,  
And how [it] lith also in hir puissaunce  
To forthre & hyndre all maner creatures,  
And calle hir pryncesse off fatal auentures, 684  
The riche tenhaunce be roial appaile,  
And be disdeyn to hyndre the poraile.
- Whan she maketh most fulsumli hir profres,  
Hir blaundisshyng is farsid with falsheed; 688  
Whan hir richessis be stuffid up in coffres,  
Thei been ay shet vnder a lok off dreed.  
Wherfore, ye riche, off o thyng takith heed,  
As your gadryng cam in with plesaunce, 692  
Riht so your losse departeth with myschaunce.
- Your gredi thrust tresour to multeplie  
Causith an etik off nounsuffisaunce,  
In you engendryng a fals ydropisie, 696  
With a sharp hunger off worldli habundaunce,  
Makyng off you a maner resemblaunce

God gave man Reason as a guide for his footsteps towards virtue; but he became irrational out of frowardness, and bound himself to Fortune,

making her a goddess in the false belief that she could help him.

Some people claim that she can give victory and further or hinder all creatures.

When she promises most, her flattery is stuffed with lies; when her wealth is piled up in chests, they are closed with a lock of dread.

Therefore, you rich, fearing loss, your greed only engenders a fever for more wealth, and you are very much like Tantalus.

666. his] *om.* P — illumyned R.

669. *is transposed with 670 and 671, and blunder indicated by letters a and b R.* 672. *is misplaced at foot of column R.*

678. *is medlid H.* 682. *how] om. R.*

684. *fatal] al maner R.* 691. *ye] the R.*

With Tantalus, — whan ye deapest synke,  
Than is *your nature* most thrustleuh for to drynke. 700

Whoever climbs  
highest on  
Fortuna's wheel  
falls when he  
least expects it;  
but the poor are  
exempt from  
such changes.

Who clymbeth hiest on Fortunys wheel  
And sodenli to richesse\* doth ascende,  
An onwar turn, afforn seyn neueradeel,  
Whan he leest wenyth makith hym descende. 704  
Fro such chaungis, who may hymselff defende,  
But thei that be with Pouert nat dismaied,  
And can with litil holde hemsilff appaied."

[How kyng hostilius worshipping fals goddis/ was  
consumpt with firy Levene.]<sup>1</sup>

While  
Bochas was  
thinking over  
this matter,  
princes who were  
once famous in  
Italy came to  
him bewailing  
their fall.

AND whil Bochas gan muse in this mateer, 708  
Considred first al worldli thyng mut faile,  
With wepyng eien [to hym] ther dede appeer  
Pryncis that whilom wer famous in Itaille,  
Which gan ther fall ful pitousli bewaile: 712  
For mor contrarie\* was ther fallyng lowe,  
That thei toform hadde [of] no myscheeff knowe.

Adversity is  
harder for a  
prince to bear  
than a poor  
wretch who has  
always lived in  
discomfort.

For mor vnkouth is thilke aduersite,  
Namli to pryncis, whan it is sodeyne, 716  
Which euer ha lyued in prosperite,  
Hauyng on Fortune no mater to compleyne,  
Than off a wrechche, that lyueth ay in peyne, —  
Off custom causeth, conceyued the sentence, 720  
Off ioie and sorwe a ful gret difference.

The remem-  
brance of past  
joy trebles their  
pain;

Off ioie passid the newe remembraunce,  
Whan folk be falle from ther felicite,  
In treble wise it doth hem gret greuauance; 724  
Thonwar turn from ther tranquillite,  
Thonsur trust and mutabilite  
In worldli power, which that thei ha[ue] founde,  
Onto ther hertis yeueth a greuous wounde. 728

but a man who  
has always  
known want is  
proof against  
misfortune.

But a wrechche, which in wrechchidnesse  
Hath euer lyued, and neuer was partable  
Off no weelfare nor off welfulnesse,

700. your nature is R — for] *om.* R.

702. richesces B, richessis J.

708. in] on H — mateer] maner R.

710. to hym] *om.* J, R. 713. contraire B. 714. of] *om.* J, R.

731. 2nd off] of no H — wealthfulnes P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 63 recto.

- Nor neuer fo[u]nd[e] Fortune fauourable, — 732  
 His sorwe, his myscheeff been so custumable,  
 That off his peynys long contynuaunce  
 Doth to his greuys a maner allegaunce.
- But to pryncis, which sat so hih aloffte, 736  
 A sodeyn fall is most contrarious,  
 And ther descendyng weel the more onsoffte,  
 In ther tryumphes that thei wer glorious.  
 Record I take off kyng Hostilius, 740  
 Which in Rome from his roial stalle,  
 Whan he sat crownyd, most sodenli is falle.
- It is remembrid off old and nat off newe,  
 Off al Rome that he was lord and sire; 744  
 The firste off kynges that wered purpil hewe,  
 And off that cite gouerned the empire,  
 Hadde off Fortune al that hym list desire,  
 Till that he fill, in all his regalie, 748  
 Into a froward dedli maladié.
- And off his peynes to fynden allegaunce, [p. 154]  
 To the temples he wente on pilgrymage,  
 His offryng made with deuout obeisaunce, 752  
 Wherbi sumdeel his peynes gan asswage;  
 And when he was restored off corage,  
 Felt hymself[e] that he dede amende,  
 To comoun profit ageyn he gan entende. 756
- Vpon Thalbanys, regnyng in his glorie,\*  
 To gret auail off Rome the cite,  
 Thoruh his knythod he hadde a gret victorie,  
 Afftir the which, be ful gret cruelte, 760  
 He beraffte hem fraunchise and liberte,  
 And made hem afftir, thoruh his hih renoun,  
 To been to Rome vnder subieccioun.
- Afftir this conquest, the stori doth deuyse, 764  
 In his noblesse ful staatli and roial,  
 He gan make a riche sacrifice  
 To queeme and plese for a memorial,  
 Affter the rihtes cerymonyal, 768

That princes suffer greatly is shewn by the fall of King Hostilius of Rome.

the first king who wore purple, and who had every-thing he desired until he became ill.

He grew better after he had made a devout pilgrimage to the temples of his country.

and was victorious over the Albans.

After this victory he made a rich sacrifice to Jupiter.

746. the empire] he thempire R.

757. Talbanys R — gloire B.

759. victoire B.

764. this] his R.

To Iubiter, be ful gret reuerence,  
Aforne his auteres with fires & encence.

but unfortunately did something wrong, and so enraged the gods that they consumed him with lightning.

But for that he in his inward entent,  
Be circumstaunces off his oblacioun, 772  
Was rechles founde and also necligent,  
Be sum froward fals affeccioune,  
The goddis kauhte an indignacioun;  
And sodenli descendyng from the heuene, 776  
He was consumpt with a firi leuene, —

His false gods, Jupiter, Saturn and Venus, were unable to help him. All Christians should defy such riffraff

His false goddis myhte hym nat auaille,  
Iubiter, Saturnus nor Venus.  
Lat al *Cbristene* defie such rascaille; 780  
For to our feith thei be contrarious.

And among goddis, a thyng most outraious,  
Ys, whan that pryncis, blent in ther folie,  
List ertheli thynges falsli deifie. 784

and never worship earthly things, for it is odious to God.

For onto God is hatful and odible  
A withdrawyng off his reuerence,  
To magnefie thynges coruptible 788  
With ondue honour, be fals concupiscence.  
Wherfor, ye Pryncis, beth war, off hih prudence,  
List God onwarli pun[y]she your noblesse,  
Maak you in erthe no fals god nor goddesse.

[How Anchus kyng of Rome was moordred by  
Lucynyo, bi thassent of his wiff.]<sup>1</sup>

Ancus Marcus succeeded to Hostilius, and was murdered with the consent of his wife,

**T**HYNKITH on Anchus, kyng off Rome toune, 792  
Which was so noble shynyng in his glorie,  
Wered a crowne, ful famous off renoun,  
Next Hostilius, as put is in memorie, 796  
Wan the palme off many gret victorie;  
But for al that, with a ful sharp[e] knyff  
He moordred was bassentyng off his wyff.

whom he greatly loved, blind to her falseness; for she coveted his riches.

He loued hir best aboue ech creature,  
Considred nat hir flatrie nor falsnesse, 800  
Hir double menyng vnder couerture  
Falsli blent this pryncis worthynesse.  
To robbe and reue hym off his gret richesse

770] Afore his auctirs *witb* here & ensence R.

777. firi] fiere R.

783. Ys] Ye R. 785. is] it is H. 788. be] *witb* R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 63 verso.

- Was hir labour, with countirfet plesaunce,  
In hir entent to brynge hym to myschaunce. 804
- This Anchus hadde a gret affeccioun,  
Onto his goddis to make sacrificises,  
And to augmente the religioun 808  
Off paganysme, maad in sundri wises.  
Thoruh his manhod and circumspect deuyses,  
Vpon Latynes, rebel to his cite,  
For comoun profit he made a gret arme. 812
- Oon off ther cites, callid Politorie,  
He knyhtli wan, maugre al ther myht;  
And whan he hadde off hem ful victorie,  
He abod no lenger, but anon foorth ryht 816  
Made al the peple, in eueri mannys siht,  
As prisoneris, this Romayn champioun,  
Be brouht aforn hym bounde into the touen.
- Eek, as I fynde, this Anchus nolde cese,  
For comoun profit in his affeccioun,  
Ther teritories taugmenten and encrese 820  
In all the cuntres abouten enviroun  
Toward the ryuer wher Tibre renneth doun; 824  
At which[e] place he leet[e] edefie  
A ful strong cite, which callid is Ostie.
- But natwithstandyng al his worthynesse,  
He was depryued, the story tellith so, 828  
Off his kyngdam and his gret richesse  
Bi a foreyn callid Lucynyo.  
His wiff Tarquild assentid was therto, 832  
Bi whos outrage and gredi couetise  
Anchus was moordred in ful cruel wise.

[How Lucynyo that mordred Anchus was aftir  
mordred.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HUS fro the wheel of Fortune he is fall; [p. 155] Lucinio obtained the crown through his fraud and eloquence 836  
Lucynio in Rome is crownyd kyng,  
And the Romayns aftir dede hym call  
Tarquyn the olde, be record off writyng.

813. ther] the R — pylitorie R. 821. his] this R.

822. encrese] crese R. 824. wher] om. H.

830. Lucimyo H. 831. Tanquild R.

833. in ful cruel wise] as ye have herd devise H, R 3, H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 64 recto.

Which hath atteyned, be fraudulent werkyng,  
 And bi his subtil forged eloquence  
 Onto thestat off roial excellence. 840

and entertained  
 the people with  
 jousts and was  
 the first king to  
 institute  
 taverns.

He first ordeyned in his estat roial  
 Turneis, iustes in castell[s] and cites,  
 And other pleies callid marcial,  
 With many famous gret solempnites, 844  
 Sessiounz for statis and degrees.

This Tarquyn eek, was first that dede his peyne  
 In open stretis tauernys to ordeyne.

He was also the  
 first to wall  
 Rome and to  
 build towers for  
 defence. He  
 conquered the  
 Sabines and  
 married  
 Tanaquil.

Eek to preserue his cite out off doubt,  
 Yiff ther enmyes list them to assaile,  
 He was the first that wallid Rome aboute

With myhti tours, onlikli for to faile,  
 And hadde also many strong bataile 852  
 With the Sabyne in ther rebelloun,  
 And made hem subiect onto Rome town.

But for he was assentid to depryue  
 Worthi Anchus from his estat roial, 856

And afftir that took Tarquyld [on]to wyue,  
 Which slouh hir lord be tresoun ful mortal,  
 God wolde off riht that he sholde haue a fal:  
 The Lord wil nat, which euery thyng may see, 860  
 Suffre moordre longe to be secre.

God would not  
 allow such a man  
 to prosper, so he  
 was slain by  
 two shepherds

For Lucynio, for his gret offence,  
 Touchyng the moordre off the kyng Anchus,  
 Islay[e]n was be sodeyn violence 864

Off too shepperdis, the stori tellith thus,  
 Which off entent[e] wer contrarious  
 Atwen hemsilff[e] be a feyned striff,  
 To fynde a weie to reue hym off his liff. 868

who came before  
 him on the  
 pretence of a  
 quarrel and then  
 fell on him with  
 an axe.

For whil the kyng sat in iugement  
 Upon ther quarel for to do iustise,  
 Ful sodenli, thei beyng off assent,  
 Fill vpon hym in ful cruel wise, 872

And with an ax, the story doth deuise,  
 Oon off hem, or any man took heed,  
 On too parties roff the kynges hed.

854. subiect] sogettis H.

857. tanquyld J, Tanaquil P, Tanquile H 5.

860. euery] euere R.

870. quarellis H.

This thyng was doon bi the procuryng  
 Off too childre, sonys to Anchus,  
 Which were exilid be fals compassyng  
 Off Lucinio, ageyn hem most irous, —  
 To hym ther presence was so odious. 876 This was done  
 But thei hem shoop, thouh thei were out off siht,  
 Ther fadres deth tauengen yiff thei myht. 880 by the in-  
 stigation of  
 Anchus'  
 children,  
 whom Lucinio  
 had exiled.

For off nature blood will vengid be,  
 To recompense the wrong off his kynreede, 884 Blood will be  
 In this chapitle, lik as ye may see, avenged, as you  
 Blood shad for blood: thus bothe dede bleede. may see in this  
 Be which exauple, lat pryncis taken heede, chapter. Let  
 How moordre doon for supplantacioun\* 888 princes remem-  
 Requereth vengauce for his fynal guerdoun. ber this.

## [Lenvoye.]

**T**HIS tragedie be cleer inspeccioun  
 Openli declareth in substauce,  
 How slauhtre of princis causith subuersioun 892 This tragedy  
 Off rewmys, cites put out off ordynaunce, plainly declares  
 Off mortal werre long contynuaunce. that the  
 Blood be supplantyng\* shad off kynges tweyne, slaughter of  
 Bexauple heer shewed, fals moordre to restreyne, 896 war and sub-  
 version and cries  
 always  
 vengeance.

The fyn declaryng off moordre & fals tresoun:  
 The deede horrible crieth ay vengauce  
 To God aboue to caste his eien doun,  
 To punshe this synne thoruh his myhti puissaunce; 900  
 For it is mooder off myscheeff & myschaunce.  
 Wherfor, ye Pryncis, doth sum lawe ordeyne,  
 Withynne your boundis thre vices to restreyne:

The vice off sclandre, moordre and poison. 904 Wherefore,  
 Wher-euer these thre hauen aqueyntaunce, Princes, see that  
 Thei brynge in sorwe and desolacioun, the evils of  
 slander, murder  
 and poison, and  
 the sorrow and  
 desolation they  
 bring are re-  
 strained in your  
 realms.  
 908  
 Put at a preeff be newe remembraunce  
 Off falsheed vsed vnder fair cuntenaunce.  
 Wherfor, ye Pryncis, doth your besi peyne,  
 Withynne your boundis these vices to restreyne.

888. subplantacioun B.

895. subplantyng B.

900. thoruh] by H.

God defend  
England from  
slander, that  
slays good fame,  
and from murder  
and poison: no  
punishment is  
too severe for  
them.

God diffende this noble region  
With these thre vices to haue\* alliaunce: 912  
For sclaudre first deuouereh hih renoun,  
And sleth good fame thoruh fals dalliaunce.  
Harm doon, to late folweth repentaunce,  
Wherfor, ye Pryncis, doth a lawe ordeyne 916  
To punshe ther malice, fals tunges to restreyne.  
God hath off moordre abhominacioun, [p. 156]  
And fals poisoun doth to hym displesaunce;  
Ther is no peyen\* in comparisoun 920  
Condigne to moordre, peised in ballaunce.  
Wherfor, ye Pryncis, makith an ordynaunce,  
Withynne your boundis off sum dedli peyne  
Bi du[e] punshyng fals moordre to restreyne. 924

Princes, let  
death be the  
final reward of  
these vices.

O noble Pryncis, prouydeth off resoun  
Ageyn these vices to make purueiaunce,  
Off rigour sheweth due execucioun  
With al your labour & your hertli instaunce. 928  
Lat deth be guerdoun for ther fynal penaunce,  
To warne all othre, be constreynt off ther peyne,  
Fro these thre vices ther corages to restreyne.

[How for the offence don to Lucrece by Tarquyn  
was never aftir crowned kyng in Rome.]<sup>1</sup>

Tarquin the Old  
and his family  
long dominated  
Rome, until the  
time of the Rape  
of Lucrece.  
Then the name  
of king came to  
an end.

**T**OUCHING this Tarquyn, of whom I now[e] 932  
tolde,  
As myn auctour maketh mencion,  
He callid was Tarquinius the olde,  
Which longe in Rome hadde dominacioun,  
Till his kynreede and generacioun, 936  
For thoffence doon onto Lucrece,  
Caused off kynges the name [for] to cese.

Old Tarquin's  
son was called  
Tarquin the  
Proud for his evil  
life.

For his sone, which aftir gan succede,  
For his outrages and his extorsiouns, 940  
And for many a-nother cruel deede,

911. this] the R. 912. thre vices] regions R — haue]  
hauen B.

913-15 are replaced by 904-6 R. 917. ther] the R.

920. peyne B. 924. punishyng P.

932. I nowe] riht now I H.

933. There is a contraction sign for ur over the u in auctour B.

934. Tarquinius R. 936. Till] Al H. 937. onto] to H.

938. for] om. R, J, P — names P. 939. sone] sony R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 64 verso.



- For his haatful vsurpaciouns,  
His froward liff and fals condiciouns,  
Among the people, bothe stille and loude,  
He callid was Tarquinius the proude. 944
- Ful obstynat he was in his entent,  
Ambicious tacroche gret richesse,  
Till that Fortune wex inpacient 948  
Ageyn[e]s hym, in al his gret noblesse.  
Gan hir snares and hir crokes dresse,  
Thouhte she wolde, but he kept hym weel,  
Al sodenli cast hym from hir wheel. 952
- A sone he hadde, ful vicious, as I fynde,  
To all vertu most contrarious —  
To be froward it cam to hym off kynde —  
And off nature proud and despitous, 956  
Ageyn the people fell and malicious,  
Nat louyd but drad; for tiran $\pi$ ye off riht  
Is thyng most hatid in the peeplis siht.
- This proude Tarquyn, the story is weel kouth, 960  
Ageyn Lucrece dede a gret outrage,  
Oppressid hir beute in his onbridled youth,  
Hir trouthe assailyng in a furious rage.  
For which his fader, he, and his lynage 964  
Exilid wern, and for this hatful thyng  
Ther was neuer afftir in Rome crownyd kyng.
- Hir bodi corrupt, she cleene off herte & thouht,  
Be force assailed was hir innocence, 968  
Oppressid hir beute, but hir sperit nouht,  
Hir chaast[e] will dede non offence;  
But entred is into hir conscience  
A gret remors, for al hir wifli trouthe, 972  
To slen hirsilff, which was to gret a route.
- And for that Bochas remembreth pitousli  
Hir dedli sorwe and lamentacioun,  
Writ hir compleynt in ordre ceriousli, 976  
Which that she made for hir oppressioun,  
I folwe muste and make mencioun,  
Afftir myn auctour parcel rehersyng,  
Touchyng hir woordis said in hir deieng. 980

Obstinate and  
avaricious, he  
reigned until  
Fortune cast  
him down from  
her wheel.

It was his  
vicious son,  
hated and feared  
by the people,

who outraged  
Lucrece; and for  
that deed he and  
his father and  
all their kin  
were exiled.

Although  
Lucrece's chaste  
will did no  
offence, she slew  
herself for re-  
morse;

and as Bochas  
wrote her dying  
complaint, so  
must I,

945. Terquinius R.

948. Impacient R, H. 959. peeple R. 963. Hir] His R.

980. 1st hir] be H.

even if I have  
already told  
something  
of it by  
bidding of my  
lord.

Al-be-it so, be biddying off my lord,  
Rehersed haue in my translacioun  
Afftir Pierius heer and ther a woord  
Off a ful doolful declamacioun 984  
Be hym remembred off entencioun,  
For hir sake men myhte seen and rede  
What wifli trouthe was in hir womanheede.

I cannot follow  
John Bochas'  
eloquence, but I  
will give you the  
substance of his  
writing.

And Iohn Bochas list nat sette a-side, 988  
But that he wolde rehersen in sentence  
Hir woful compleynt, & therupon abide,  
Off wrongis doon onto hir innocence.  
And thouh I cannat folwe his eloquence, 992  
I shal sue the trouthe off rehersyng  
As in substau[n]ce theffect off his wrytyng.

The morning  
after the foul  
deed, Lucrece  
arose, and with a  
deadly pale face  
dressed herself  
in funereal black

¶ The morwe next afftir this foule deede,  
Lucrece vproos with a ful dedli cheer. 996  
Out off hir face gon was al the rede,  
And dirked wern hir heuenli eien cleer,  
Al clad in blak[e] afftir the maneer  
Off thilke folk which in especiall 1000  
Ar wont to gon to feestis funeral.

and said to her  
husband, father  
and assembled  
friends,

All hir freendis beyng in presence, [p. 157]  
Husbonde, fader, with other eek also,  
Bi and bi rehersyng in sentence 1004  
The circumstaunces off hir hertli wo.  
And or that I any ferther go,  
Vnder hope my lord will me supporte,  
What that she saide I will to you reporte. 1008

[The greuous compleynt of Lucrece vpon hir oppres-  
sioun.] <sup>1</sup>

"My lord, since  
I, Lucrece, am  
joined to you in  
marriage as your  
humble subject,

"FOR-ASMOCHE," quod she, "as I Lucrece  
Am be the lawe ioyned in mariage  
To the, my lord, whos loue shal ay encrece  
Towardis the, with al the surplusage 1012  
Off wifli trouthe tenduren al myn age,  
As humble subiect with feithful obeisaunce  
Vnder thi lordshipe and thi gouernaunce,

983. Piernis R, Pieryns H, Pierins J, pyernus R 3, pyrrus H 5,  
Pierius P. 986. hir] his H.

991. onto] to R. 996. dedli] dooleful H. 997. hir] his R.  
999. Al] And R. 1000. folk] om. R. 1006. any] may R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 64 verso.

O Colatyn, my lord and trewe husbonde,  
 Best beloued off hool affeccioun,  
 I will no mor no quarell take on honde  
 Nor in no wise make non accioun,  
 Withoute that thou list encline doun  
 Goodli thyn eris to yiue me audience  
 To that I shall reherse in thi presence.

1016 O best beloved  
 Collatine, I will  
 take no action  
 until you have  
 heard my story.

1020

Iniurie doon or any maner wrong  
 Ageyn my worshepe or myn honeste,  
 Bi the lawe my sentence is maad strong,  
 It touchet[h] you also weel as me,  
 I am so hooli yolden onto the, —  
 Thou art myn hed, who cleerli can discernen,  
 Lord and husbonde my bodi to gouerne.

1024 "Injury done to  
 my honesty  
 touches you as  
 well as me.

1028

Parcial causes in sooth ther may non be  
 Atwen vs tweyne nor no disseueraunce:  
 For soote and bittir, ioie and aduersite,  
 We must hem weie bothe in o balounce,  
 Countirpeise our sorwes [&] our plesaunce,  
 Entirmedle all thynge that is in doubte,  
 Receyue our fortune as it komth aboute.

1032 There may be  
 no sundering of  
 our joy and  
 aduersity: we  
 must weigh  
 them both in one  
 balance;

1036

Ther may atwen vs be no menyng double,  
 But oon herte, o will and o corage.  
 And as [a] woman that stondesth now in trouble,  
 Withoute polishyng off any fair language,  
 I mut disclose to you the gret outrage  
 Doon onto me, and pleyntli it discure,  
 Which to redresse lith hooli in your cure..

1040 and as no deceit  
 can be between  
 us, I must  
 frankly disclose  
 to you my  
 outrage, which  
 it lies in your  
 power to  
 redress.

For the mater, to speke in woordes pleyne,  
 A-riht out serchid and the trouthe out founde,  
 As a iust cause, ondifferent to tweyne  
 Toward vs bothe the quarell doth rebounde.  
 And mor strongli our mater for to grounde,  
 Reherse I will, so that ye sauff it vouche,  
 A mortall wrong which the & me doth touche.

1044 "It is a mortal  
 wrong, which  
 you must clearly  
 understand.

1048

1018. no] none R.  
 1022. reherse in thi presence] rehersen in sentence H.  
 1024. or] & R. 1027. hooli] om. R.  
 1034. &] om. J, H 5, R 3.  
 1037. menyng] mevyng R.  
 1038. o will o hert H — 2nd o] one R.  
 1045. A-riht] at riht H.

- "I was in a castle called Col-  
lace, when  
young Tarquin  
appeared  
without  
warning.
- In a castell which callid is Collace,  
Off which my lord heer hath the gouernaunce, 1052  
Tarquyn the yonge cam into that place.  
I, full diswarre to make purueiaunce  
Ageyn his comyng or any ordenaunce,  
Tofor nat warnyd off his officeris, 1056  
Sat onpurueied among my chaumbereris.
- "To avoid  
idleness I and  
my women sat  
spinning soft  
wools.
- Off entent teschewen idilnesse,  
We sat and span vpon wolles soffte;  
For she off vices is a cheeff maistresse 1060  
Wher she is cherisshid & iset aloffte:  
But off custum as I haue do ful offte,  
I and my women duli as we ouhte,  
Tauoide slouthe ful bisili we wrouhte. 1064
- "He came in  
very respectfully  
and deceived me  
with words that  
were contrary  
to his heart.
- His ent[e]ryng was meek and debonaire,  
Benygne off port, off look & off visage,  
With a pretence off many woordes faire,  
In whos menyng was ful gret outrage, 1068  
His cheer contrarie \* onto his corage.  
In this wise ther he was receuyed,  
Wherbi, alas, I falsli was deceuyed!
- "I received him  
courteously, as  
became a man  
of his position:  
yet all the while  
he intended to  
betray me.
- At pryme face, as me thouhte it due, 1072  
I hym receuyed at his in comyng:  
Roos up meekli and gan hym to salue,  
As appertened in alle maner thyng  
Onto the sone off a worthi kyng. 1076  
And treuli Tarquyn, for which I seie alas,  
Me to be-traisshe stood in the same caas.
- The son of a  
king should be  
a protector of  
women and play  
the part of a  
knight.
- A kynges sone sholde off du[e]te <sup>1</sup>  
Been to wommen wall and proteccioun, 1080  
Preserue and keepe hem in al surete,  
That no man sholde, off no presumpcioun,  
Doon hem no wrong nor oppressioun,

1058. teschewen] to shew B. 1064. we] om. R.

1067. many] may R. 1069. contraire B. 1074. to] om. R.

<sup>1</sup> The following five lines, to which are appended the two last of the preceding stanza, are inserted before line 1079 as a complete stanza in the *Phillipp-Garrett MS.*, section 10, leaf 6 a:

I trusted well his riall noblesse  
Be any sing pat y koup a spie  
He no þing ment but troup & gentilnesse  
But oft falleth as clerkes specife  
Vndre fair speche men may treson wrye.

- Rather deie than seen hem suffre onriht, 1084  
 Aduertisyng theoffice off a knyht.
- But in contraire off knyhtod he hath wrouht, [p.158] "But Tarquin  
 Be fals outrage doon ageyn[e]s me. only sought  
 Wrong[e] weies and crokid menys souht 1088 means to break  
 Off lawes tweyne to breke the liberte, both civil and  
 And difface the auctorite natural law in  
 Off lawe ciuyle & natural also, my person.  
 In my persone offendyng bothe too. 1092
- First be his fals[e] subtil compassyng  
 He gan espie thestris off the place;  
 And whan a-bedde alone I lay slepyng,  
 Lik a leou<sup>n</sup>, ful sterne off look and face, 1096 "First he spied  
 With his lefft hand my throte he dede embrace, out the inner  
 And in his other heeld ageyn al lawe rooms, and then,  
 Me for toppresse a naked suerd idrawe. when I lay  
 asleep in bed,  
 he came on me  
 like a lion,
- Thus afforcynge my wifli chastite, 1100 and, seizing me  
 Ageyn knyhtod he dede this gret offence, by the throat,  
 Mi liff, my worshepe put in perplexite, threatened my  
 Hauyng no myht to make resistence, — life with a naked  
 Me manacyng be dedli violence, sword if I would  
 The ton off tweyne: to deie in his entente, not consent to  
 Or to auoutri\* falsli to consente. commit  
 adultery.
- Thus I stood sool atwen deth & diffame, 1108 "Thus I stood  
 Mi bodi corrupt, my sperit abood[e] cleene; between death  
 Mi spousaile broke, & my good[e] name and dishonour,  
 For euer disclaundred, that whilom shon ful sheene. my body cor-  
 Euel fame off custum will alwei wexe greene, rupt, my spirit  
 Neuer deie, the peple so hem disporte pure; but my  
 The werste off thynges gladli to reporte. 1112 good name  
 destroyed for  
 ever.
- Alas, alas! among my sorwes all, .  
 This oon the moste that doth myn herte agrise; — "Alas, the most  
 I am nat worthi that men me sholde call, 1116 terrible of my  
 Or haue the name in no maner wise, sorrows is that I  
 For thoffence which ye han herd deuise, am no longer  
 To be callid, in this wrecchid liff, worthy to be  
 Off Collatyn from hen[ne]sfoorth the wiff. 1120 called your wif!

1106. tauoutri B.

1108. my] in H.

1112. hem so H.

1113. thynges] al H.

1115. the] om. R.

“My eyes are  
blinded with  
shame: never  
may I be  
reckoned as an  
honest matron!”

Myn eien also be blyndid with derknesse,  
Onli for shame to lefften vp ther siht,  
Outher ther stremys or bemys vp to dresse,  
Off the cleer heuene to looke vpon the liht. 1124  
Nor I mai neuer been off the noumbre off riht,  
Off trewe matrones, among hem ferr nor neer,  
For to be rekned in ther kalendeer.

“Let my injury  
be so punished  
that it may  
become a lasting  
example to  
adulterers.”

Lat myn Iniurie and this mortal cryme 1128  
Be so pun[y]shed off riht and equite,  
Withoute delay off any lenger tyme,  
That euer afftir it may example be  
Thoruh al the world and eek in this cite, — 1132  
With such a peyne therupon deuised,  
That all auoutours may be therbi chastised.

“And if it seems  
to you that I too  
am culpable, I  
will patiently  
accept my  
punishment.”

And yiff it seeme in your opynyoun,  
In this caas I sholde been onpure, 1136  
I will receyue iust punycioun  
And the peyne pacientli endure,  
Yiff it so stonde that parauenture  
Ye deeme off resoun, that be so iust & stable, 1140  
In this mateer that I be coupable.”

After she had  
told her story  
and they had  
absolved her of  
all blame and  
promised to  
avenge her  
wrong, she took  
a sharp knife and  
pierced herself  
to the heart.

Hir tale told. Whan thei longe hadde musid  
On this compleynt in ther inward siht,  
Off trouthe echon thei heeld hir ful excusid, 1144  
Made all beheste, with al ther ful[le] myht  
Tauenge hir wrong; and Lucrece anon riht  
Took a sharp knyff, or thei myhte aduerte,  
And rooff hirsilff euene thoruh the herte. 1148

¶ **The Compleynt of Bochas Oppon þe luxurie of  
Princis by examplis of diuers myschevis.<sup>1</sup>**

Bochas in hot  
indignation  
wrote a com-  
plaint against  
those princes,

**B**OCHAS in herte brennyng hoot as fir  
Off verai ire and indignacioun  
Ageyn tho princis, which in ther desir  
Han fulli set ther delectacioun, 1152  
Ther felicite and ther affeccioun  
To folwe ther lustis off fals lecherie,  
Froward spousbreche and off auoutrie.

1125. neuer] om. R.

1126. nor] or R.

1140. be] it be H. 1141. coupable R.

1148. thoruh] to H.

1149. hoot] as hoot H.

<sup>1</sup> *The same heading in J and R. by] as by J—many dyuers J—myschevis] myschaunces R, J.*

- He writ ageyn hem that seeke occasiouns,  
 Places off lust to han ther libertees  
 For to fulfille ther delectaciouns;  
 And for tacomplisshē ther gret dishonestees,  
 Deuyse out tauernes in burwes & citees,  
 And sitting ther among ther cumpanye,  
 Afftir the deede thei booste off ther folye.
- Yiff any man pynche at ther outrage,  
 Or them rebuke for ther tran[s]gressiouns,  
 Thei will ansuere with froward fals language,  
 And for ther parti allegge gret resouns:  
 First how it longeth to ther condiciouns  
 Be riht off Nature, as it is weel kouth,  
 Frelī to vse lecheri in youth;
- Afferme also, how lawe of Kynde is fre,  
 And so afforce hem to sustene ther partie  
 Bexample off Daud, which that took Bersabe,  
 And for hir sake how he slouh Vrie,  
 Dede manslauhtrē and fals auoutrie, —  
 For hem aleggyng, ageyn riht and resoun,  
 For Dalida the luxure off Sampson.
- The stori also thei frowardli applie,  
 How for a woman prudent Salamoun,  
 The Lord offendyng, dede ydolatrie.  
 And in diffence off ther opynyoun,  
 Reherse these storyes for excusacioun  
 Off ther errour, therbi a pris to wynne,  
 As tofor God lecheri wer no synne.
- Thei nat considre in ther entencioun  
 Off these stories eueri circumstaunce:  
 First off kyng Daud the gret contricioun,  
 Nor vpon Sampson how God took gret vengeance;  
 First how he loste his force & his puissaunce  
 For his offence — thei ha[ue] nat this in mynde,  
 Nor how that bothe his eien wer maad blynde.
- Nor ther resouns thei list nat to encline  
 For to conceyue in ther discrecioun,  
 The sperit off wisdam, heuenli & dyuyne,  
 Was take away fro prudent Salamoun  
 In chastisyng for his transgressioun.

1156 who, following their evil desires, commit adultery, and afterwards publicly boast of their folly.

1160

[p. 159] If any man rebuke them, they will tell him that it is a law of nature to do such things in one's youth,

1164

1168

and allege David and Bathsheba and Samson and Delilah in their defence,

1172

1176

and tell also how Solomon became an idolater for the love of a woman; — as if harlotry were no sin before God!

1180

1184 They never consider David's remorse or God's vengeance on Samson,

1188

1192 or how Solomon was deprived of his spirit of wisdom for his offence, and, as some doctors affirm, sorely repented afterwards.

1157. lust] luster R.

1171. so afforce] tafforce H.

And summe doctours affermen ouermore,  
How Salamon repentid hym ful sore. 1196

People say that the licentiousness of youth is natural to all healthy animals; they think only of vicious pleasures and lie and boast and now-a-days hold horrible oaths, flattery and ribald speech courtsey.

The play off youthe folk calle it lecherie,  
Seyn that it is a gamen off Nature,  
And to sustene and bern vp ther partie, 1200

How it sit weel, be record off scripture,  
Onto euerich liffli creature  
That stant in helthe and is coraious,  
Off verrai kynde for to be lecherous. 1204

Vicious report thei han in remembraunce,  
But vertuouus thyng is ferr out off mynde;  
Flessfli lustis and lecherous plesauunce  
In ther desirs be nat lefft behynde. 1208

Auauntyng, lieng thei can off newe out fynde;  
And now-adaies thei holde curtesie  
Othes horrible, flatryng and ribaudie.

They never think of noble Scipio and of his advice to Masinissa either to leave Sophonisba alone or else marry her.

In ther auys thei taken litil heede 1212

Onto the doctryn off noble Scipioun,  
Which comauudid, in story as I reede,  
To Masmissa, ful famous off renoun,  
Nat to touche be no condicioun 1216  
Sophonisba, fairest off visage,  
But yiff it were be weie off mariage.

Although of royal blood, she was virtuouus and wedded to King Syphax, who reigned in Numidia.

Thouh she wer born off the blood roiall,  
Hir youthe was set to al honeste, 1220  
Douhter and hair to noble Hastruball,  
Duc off Cartage, the story ye may see;  
And for hir vertues off femynyte,  
She weddid was, off berthe as she was lik, 1224  
To kyng Siphax, which regned in Affrik.

To prove the liberty of virtue and the thraldom of vice, Cato shewed that the former is never subject to Fortuna.

And for to preue the grete liberte  
Which is in vertu conueied be resoun,  
And the fals thraldam off dishoneste, — 1228  
Off bothe to make a pleyn comparisoun,  
Afftir the doctryn off Censoryn Catoun,  
Shewid be hym to folkis in comune,  
That vertu neuer is subiect to Fortune: 1232

1196. evir more H. 1199. a game H.  
1210. holde it curtasye H. 1215. Mascinissa' P.  
1223. vertues] vertuouus R.  
1224. was weddyd R.



- Vertu conserueth mesour and resoun,  
 Considreth thynges afor or thei befall,  
 Takith non enprises but off discrecioun,  
 And on prudence foundeth hir werkes all; 1236  
 Ay to hir counsail attempraunce she doth call,  
 Warli prouydyng in hirsilff withynne  
 The eende off thynges tofor or she begynne.
- This was the doctryn tauht foorth off Catoun, 1240  
 Lecherous lustis to put hem vndir foote,  
 Grauntyng to vertu the domynacioun,  
 Plukke up vices, braunche, cropp & roote.  
 Frut off goodnesse groweth up so soote, 1244  
 Whan it is plauntid off youthe in a corage,  
 It neuer appalleth in helthe off his tarage.
- Catoun with vertu was a cheeff officer, [p. 160]  
 Preferryng euer comoun commodites 1248  
 Tofor profites that wer synguler;  
 Tenhaunce the comoun in kyngdames & citees,  
 Ther wittis peised and ther habilitees,  
 Personys promotyng, in whom it was supposid, 1252  
 That thei in vertu wer natureli disposid.
- Manli off herte he was ay to susteene  
 Indifferentli trouthe and al iustise;  
 Flesshli delites off folk that wer oncleene 1256  
 He was ay redi be rigour to chastise,  
 And sette lawes in ful prudent wise  
 For to punshe flaterers and lechours  
 And such as wern openli auoutours. 1260
- He hadde off wommen non opynyoun  
 With hem to dele for lust nor for beute,  
 But yiff it were for procreacioun, —  
 So stable he was founde in his degre, 1264  
 The book reedyng off inmortalite  
 Which Plato made, the trouthe weel out souht,  
 Therin concludyng, how soulis deie nouht,  
 But lyueth euer outhur in ioie or peyne. 1268  
 Thus wrot Plato in his orygynall:  
 Men may the body be deth ful weel constreyne,

Virtue has foresight and undertakes nothing without discretion,

which was Cato's doctrine.

Cato always preferred the welfare of the people to individual advantage,

and supported justice and truth, and was ever ready to punish unclean folk.

He had no desire to have ado with women except for procreation,

and read Plato's book on the immortality of the soul.

1235. *Emprises* H. 1237. she] he R.

1239. tofor or she] or they R. 1245. a] om. R.

1246. in helthe off] of helth in H, in hegh of R 3, in heyth of P.

1265. *Inmortalite* H. 1268. lyueth] lyven H.

1269. Thus] this H.

- But the soule abit ay inmortal.  
 For which this Catoun, stedfast as a wall, 1272  
 For comoun profit to deie was nat afferd,  
 Whan he hymself slouh with a naked suerd.
- Cato was not afraid to die for the common weal, saying to  
 But to Fortune afor his deth he saide,  
 "O thou pryncesse off worldli goodes veyne, 1276  
 To thi flatereris I neuer dede abraide,  
 Thi fauour is so fals and oncerteyne  
 That neuer I fauht no fraunchise to atteyne  
 As for my-silff, nor parcial syngulerte, 1280  
 But al for profit touchyng the comounte.
- Fortune, "I never yielded to thy flattery nor sought gain for myself. I resisted Cesar for freedom's sake and forsook life, despising the world."  
 A-geyn Cesar I made resistence,  
 To conquere fredam to me & to the toun,  
 Freli teschewe his mortal violence, 1284  
 This world despisyng in myn opynoun, —  
 Our fraunchise thrallid vnder subieccioun,  
 Iustli forsakyng the variaunce off this liff,  
 Mi soule conveid to be contemplatiff." 1288
- Before his death this prudent old Cato wrote beseeching immoral princes to follow the example of Drusus,  
 This philisophre, this prudent old Catoun,  
 Tendryng in herte comoun comoditees,  
 Toform his deth wrot off compassioun  
 To them that sat in roial dignitees, 1292  
 Which hadde off vertu lost the libertees,  
 Pryncis besechyng, that wer luxurious,  
 To take exauple and folwe kyng Drusus.
- who loved virtue and was always faithful to his wife.  
 ¶ The which[e] Drusus, be successioun 1296  
 Heir to Augustus, was next hym emperour,  
 Sett al in vertu his affeccioun,  
 And it to cherishe dede hooli his labour.  
 To lust onleefful he neuer gaff fauour; 1300  
 And touchyng loue, duryng all his liff,  
 He neuer hadde lust but onli to his wiff.
- Once when asked with incredulous impertinence what sort of attraction could his wife have for him,  
 And in his paleis, myd off his roiall see,  
 Off noble pryncis duellyng in Rome toun 1304  
 He axed was, for al his dignite,  
 What maner corage or temptacioun,  
 Or what feruence or delectacioun

1271. Immortal H, R.

1277. flaterers H. 1279. fauht] auht H. 1280. nor] no R.

1286. Our] or H. 1287. this] his H. 1293. the] ther H.

1302. to] til H.

- Withynne hymself he hadde off louys play, 1308  
 Sool bi his wiff whan he a-bedde lay.
- And lik a prynce fulfillid off hih noblesse, he answered simply, that he had never known another.  
 Ansuerde ageyn with sobre cuntenaunce, 1312  
 "Touchyng such lust as folweth fleshlynesse,  
 Lik as Nature me put in gouernaunce,  
 In oon alone is set al my plesaunce:  
 For with non other for no concupiscence,  
 Sauff with my wiff I neuer dede offence." 1316
- Pryncis echon folwe nat the traas All princes have not followed in Drusus' foot-steps.  
 Off noble Drusus, as ye shal vndirstonde; —  
 For summe ha[ue] stonde\* al in a-nother caas, 1320  
 Such as can holde too or thre on honde,  
 Now heer, now ther, as botis home to londe,  
 Nat considryng ther cres nor disauail,  
 Whan newfangilnesse bloweth in ther sail.
- ¶ Eek Bochas writith, sum princis ha[ue] be founde, 1324  
 Which viciousli ha[ue] do ther besy peyne, Some even go so far as to seduce virtuous women by flattery and young girls with brutal threats and torments.  
 Vertuous women be flatrie to confounde,  
 And tendre maidnes to bryngen in a treyne,  
 Such manacis & tormentis to ordeyne, 1328  
 Them to transfourme from ther perseueraunce  
 And interrupte ther virgynal constaunce.
- But off such folk that yeue no fors off shame, [p. 161] Of all such shameless  
 Nor dreede God such treynes to deuse, 1332 people married men are the worst: I'm  
 Husbandmen in soth ar most to blame sure their wives  
 With foreyn women to trespass in such wise: are quite  
 I trowe ther wyues may hem inouh suffice; sufficient for  
 For many ar feeble ther dettis for to quyte, 1336 although they delight in  
 Thouh thei in chaung themsilff falsli delite. change.
- Summe afferme, for themsilff alleggyng, and say that  
 To such outrage that thei ha[ue] licence Nature gives  
 Freeli off Nature to vse ther owne thyng, 1340 them permission  
 And in such caas to no wiht doon offence. to do as they  
 But froward is ther errour in sentence, please with their  
 Fro bond off wedlok, whan thei be so onstable, own bodies.  
 And tofor God most hatful and dampnable. 1344 But they are very hateful to God.

1311. Ageyn answerd R. 1317. traas] trac is H.  
 1319. stonden B. 1323. blowen H.  
 1333. ar] be R, er H. 1337. falsely hem silff H.  
 1338. ther silff H. 1343. Fro] For H.

Reason distinguishes the life of man from that of animals. She has given him the knowledge of right and wrong and the power to resist vice,

For she that is thoruh hir hih noblesse  
 Namyd off clerkis, which cleerli can concerne,  
 Douhter off God, ladi and pryncesse,  
 Resoun callid, to guye man and gouerne, 1348  
 Tween good and euel iustli to discernen, —  
 She hath departid, pleyntli to concluden,  
 The liff off man fro liff off beestis rude.

and shewn him that once she has fled away, he becomes a beast rather

This ladi Resoun, sithen go ful yore, 1352  
 Gaff onto man witt and discrecioun,  
 Tauhte hym also bi hir souereyn lore  
 Twen vice and vertu a gret dyuysioun,  
 And that he sholde in his eleccioun 1356  
 Onto al vertu naturali obeie,  
 And in contraire al vicious liff werreie, —

than a human being.

And to enprente in his memorial,  
 How off luxure the gret dishoneste 1360  
 Difforme a man & make hym bestial,  
 And disfigure, off what estaat he be:  
 For whan that resoun, in hih or low degre,  
 Is fled away, folk may afferme than, 1364  
 He is lik a beeste rather than a man.

Therefore let princes amend their lives and punish all those who would destroy the honest fame of women.

Wherfor lat pryncis that ha[ue] be defectiff  
 To folwe ther lustis off sensualite,  
 Shape hem be resoun for tamende ther liff 1368  
 And to conserue and keepe ther chastite,  
 Bothe off virgines\* and wiffli honeste,  
 And to pun[y]she all tho that list labour  
 The honest fame off wommen to deuoure. 1372

For who can give back a good name once it is lost?

For whan a lechour be force or be maistrie  
 Defoulid hath off virgynes the clennessen,  
 Widwes oppressid, and be auoutrie  
 Assailed wyues that stood in stabilnesse, 1376  
 Who mai thanne ther sclaudrous harm redresse,  
 Whan ther good name is hurt be such report? —  
 For fame lost onys can neuer haue his resort.

1348. man] folk R.  
 1360. luxurie R.  
 1362. he] thei H.  
 1368. for] for to R.  
 1370. virgines] wyuys B.

A theeff may robbe a man off his richesse  
 And be sum mene make restitucioun;  
 And sum man may disherite & oppresse  
 A poore man from his possessioun,  
 And afftir[ward] make satisfaccioun;  
 But no man may restore in no degre  
 A maide robbid off hir virgynyte.

1380 Thieves and oppressors of the poor can make restitution; but no man can restore to a maid her lost chastity.  
 1384

A man mai also bete a castell down,  
 And beelde it afftir mor fresshli to the siht,  
 Exile a man out off a regioun  
 And hym reuoke, wher it be wrong or riht;  
 But no man hath the poweer nor the myht  
 For to restore the paleis virgynal  
 Off chastite, whan broken is the wal.

1388 A castle can be pulled down and afterwards rebuilt; an exile may be recalled;

Men mai also put out off seruise,  
 And officeres remeue from ther place,  
 And at a day, whan Fortune list deuise,  
 Thei mai ageyn restored been to grace;  
 But ther is nouthur tyme set nor space,  
 Nor neuer in story nouthur rad nor seyn,  
 That maidenhed lost recurid was ageyn.

1392 officials and menials can be discharged and again taken into service; but it has never been told that maidenhood once lost was ever again recovered.

For which men sholde haue a conscience,  
 Rewe in ther herte and repente sore,  
 And ha[ue] remors off ther gret offence,  
 To rauysshe thyng which thei may nat restore.  
 For it is said and hath be said ful yore,  
 The emeraud greene off parfit chastite,  
 Stole onys away may nat recurid be.

1400 For this reason men should have conscience and not take what they cannot return.

And hard it is to rauysshe a tresour  
 Which off nature is nat recuperable;  
 Lordshipe may nat, off kyng nor emperour,  
 Refourme a thyng which is nat reformable:  
 Rust off diffame is inseparable,  
 And maidenheed[e] lost off newe or yore,  
 No man alyue mai it ageyn restore.

1408 Even the lordship of kings cannot repair that which is irrevocably ruined.

1412

1381. sum mene] forn men H.

1384. afftirward] afftir J, P, H 5—afftirward make] aftir make dew R 3.

1389. 2nd a] his H. 1390. wher] whedir R.

1398. tyme nouthir H. 1404. thei may] maist H.

1413. maydenhoode H.

1414. on lyve H.

The old Romans  
patiently put up  
with tyrants and  
robbers, but they  
were careful to  
punish adul-  
terers,

Romeyns olde thoruh ther pacience [p. 162]  
Suffrede tirantis in ther tyrannyes, 1416  
And in ther cite to do gret violence,  
The people toppresse with ther robberies;  
But to pun[y]she thei sette streiht spies  
On fals auoutours, at it is weel kouth, 1420  
Widwes to rauysshe & maidnes in ther youth.

as is shewn by  
the exile of King  
Tarquin and the  
death of Appius  
Claudius.

Vpon this mateer the stori berth witnessse,  
Touchyng thexil off kyng Tarquynyus,  
Afform rehersed be writyng ful expresse 1424  
The hatful deth off Appius Claudius  
For his trespas doon to Virgynyus,  
The iugementis rehersed and the peyne;  
And fro ther office depryued bothe tweyne. 1428

Was not the city  
of the Shechem-  
ites laid  
desolate for  
the crime of  
Shechem against  
Dinah?

Was nat the cite whilom desolat  
Off Synachites for the\* ribaudie  
Off oon Sychem, which gan a gret debat  
To haue\* acomplished his foul lecherie, 1432  
Whan yonge Dyna, as bookis specefie,  
Wente rek[e]lesli walkyng vp and doun  
To seen the maidnes off that roial toun?

He saw her  
walking alone  
and assaulted  
her, for she had  
no chance to run  
away;

But whan Sichem this Dyna dede espie 1436  
Sool bi hirself[e] walke in the cite,  
He gan anon assaile hir be maistrie,  
And for tafforcen hir virgynyte,  
Because she hadde no leiser for to fle. 1440  
Whos gret offence and transgressioun  
The cite brouhte onto destruccioun.

but her father  
Jacob and her  
brothers Simeon  
and Levi and all  
her kin

Hir fadir Iacob & hooli hir kynreede  
Ageyn this Sichem gan inwardli disdeyne; 1444  
Whan the furie off Mars was most to dreede,  
To be vengid thei dede ther besy peyne.  
And speciali hir worthi brethren tweyne  
Fill on the cite, Symeon and Leuy, 1448  
Tauenge ther suster & stroie it fynaly.

1417. citees R.

1418. The] *witb* H.

1422. the] ther R.

1428. ther] the R.

1430. the] ther B, J, H, R, the H 1, H 5, Sloane, R 3.

1431. sichen R. 1432. Taue B.

1433. bookis] bochas R.

- So mortalli thei gan with hem stryue,  
 With ther suerdis grounde sharp & keene,  
 Off male childre thei lefte non alyue,  
 1452 Thei wer so vengable in ther furious teene.  
 The Sichanytes myhte nat susteene  
 That dai ageyn hem to stonden at diffence,  
 So importable was ther violence. 1456
- For wher that God list punshe a man off riht  
 Bi mortal suerd, farweel al resistance:  
 Whan grace faileth, away goth force & myht,  
 Feblith off pryncis the magnyficence,  
 1460 Chaungeth ther\* power into inpotence,  
 Reuersith the kynges ther statli regalie,  
 Exauple in Sichem, for his fals ribaudie.
- It was an hard dreedful punycioun,  
 1464 That, O Pryncis, trespas in lecherie  
 Caused afor God that al a regioun  
 Destroied was withoute remedie.  
 This story told[e] for texemplefie, 1468  
 Whan noble pryncis to women them submitte,  
 Grace and al fauour anon doth fro them flitte.
- Off this stori what sholde I write mor?  
 In Genesis the residue ye may reede,  
 1472 The deth off Sichem and off kyng Emor,  
 And how ther kyngdam destroied was in deede.  
 Off Sichanites, loo, heer the fynal meede,  
 Off lecherie and off his fals plesauce, 1476  
 Which many a rewm hath brouht onto myschaunce!
- ¶ What sholde I eftt reherse ageyn or write  
 The fals auoutri off Paris and Heleyne?  
 Ther woful fall Guido dede endite; 1480  
 Poetis echon dede eek ther besi peyne  
 To declare, how onli bi these tweyne  
 The worthi blood, for short conclusioun,  
 Off Troie and Grece cam to destruccioun. 1484
- And why should  
 I write again  
 about Paris and  
 Helen? Guido  
 and other poets  
 have declared  
 how all the  
 noble blood of  
 Troy and  
 Greece came  
 to an end on  
 their account.

1451. sharp] & sharp H. 1455. stonden] stoden R.  
 1458. al] & R. 1461. ther] the B — Impotence H, R.  
 1463. fals] om. R.  
 1468. This] be H.  
 1471. stori] mateer R.  
 1475. Sychamytes H.  
 1478. ageyne reherce R.

But offte it fallith that mekil habundaunce  
 Off worldli good, with gret ese and richesse,  
 In folkis that sette al hooli ther plesaunce  
 To folwe ther lustis off froward wilfulnesse, 1488  
 Hath caused in londes gret myscheeff & distresse,  
 Whan vicious liff ther corages dede encoumbre,  
 Destroyed kyngdames & peeplis out off noumbre.

When people will not turn from their licentiousness, they are inevitably brought to confusion, like the Gibeonites,  
 For whan the people thoruh fals obstynacie 1492  
 Is indurat tamende hem and correcte,  
 And wil nat turne hem from ther lecherie,  
 But ay ar redi ther soules to infecte, —  
 And onto purpos my stile I will directe, 1496  
 Texemplefie how Gabaa the touz  
 Was for his synne brouht to confusioun.

Whilom this people callid Gabanytes, [p. 163]  
 From Beniamyn descendid in ther lyne, 1500  
 Wer ai disposid to folwe ther delites,  
 And off custum ther wittis dede enclyne  
 In worldli plente to flouren & to shyne,  
 And dempte alwai, to them it was most due 1504  
 Off wilfulnesse ther lustis for to sue.

who outraged the Levite's wife  
 In lecherie was set al ther plesaunce,  
 And in that vice thei ladde most ther liff,  
 Werbi thei wer[e]n brouht onto myschaunce, 1508  
 And many on slayn be ful mortal striff,  
 Whan the Leuite cam forbi with his wiff,  
 Ful excellent off fetures and beute,  
 And took his loggyng withynne that gret cite. 1512

and caused her death,  
 He was ful old, and she was inli fair,  
 He inpotent and she but tendre off age,  
 Thoruh Gabaa makyng ther repair.  
 The citeseyns off inportune rage, 1516  
 Shewing the furie off ther gret outrage,  
 So longe that nyht hir beute dede assaile,  
 Till liff and breth attonys dede faile.

1485. it] om. H.

1490. corage R.

1498. his] this H — to] om. R.

1507. vice] wyse R.

1514. impotent R, H.

1516. importune R, H.



- Contagious was the sclaundre & diffame,\*  
 In Iudicum the story ye mai reede,  
 Which to reherse is a maner shame,  
 To heere thabusioun off that foule deede;  
 And how the Leuite amorwe gan take\* heede  
 With pitous cheer, & sauh his yonge wiff  
 Tofor the gate depnyued off hir liff.
- He hente hir up & leid hir on his asse;  
 To noise this crym vpon eueri side,  
 Thouhte in such caas he myhte do no lasse, —  
 Took a sharp suerd, & list no lenger bide,  
 On twelue parties he gan hir to deuide,  
 And to ech Tribe off Jacob he hath sent  
 A certeyn parti, to seen ther iugement.
- Which thyng to hem was hatful & terrible,  
 And in ther siht ful abhomyable.  
 And in al haste likli and possible,  
 Alle off o will and o corage stable,  
 On Gabonites for to be vengable  
 Thei gadred han, shortli to conclude,  
 Tassaile that toun a ful gret multitude.
- Whan thei first mette, atwen hem thus it stood:  
 The twelue Tribus wer twies put to fiht,  
 On outhar parti gret quantite off blood  
 Was shad among hem in that mortal fiht;  
 For sexti thousand, who that counte ariht,  
 Wer slay[e]n ther, the stori wil nat lie,  
 Tauenge the sclaundre off fals avoutrie.
- Loo, heer the guerdoun off the froward firis  
 In lecherous folk, that wil nat staunchid be,  
 That brente so hooete thoruh bestial desiris  
 In Gabaa the myhti strong cite,  
 Which was destroyed for his inquite,  
 And almost brouht off Beniamyn the lyne  
 Thoruh this offence to eternal ruyne.

1520 and brought  
 great slander  
 and defame on  
 themselves, as  
 is told in  
 Judges.

1524

1528 The Leuite  
 divided her  
 body into 12  
 parts and sent  
 one to each of  
 the Twelve  
 Tribes,

1532

1536 who resolved to  
 take vengeance  
 on the  
 Gibeonites,

1540

1544 and fought a  
 battle with  
 them in which  
 sixty thousand  
 men were slain  
 and their city  
 destroyed and  
 the line of  
 Benjamin  
 almost brought  
 to ruin for ever.

1548

1552

1520. was] *om.* J, P — &] & the B, R, H, J, H 5.  
 1524. on morwe R — taken B.  
 1527. hente] sent H — on] vpon H. 1530. abide H.  
 1531. hir] hir hede R. 1532. to] *om.* R.  
 1537. 2nd o] of o R. 1540. that] the R.  
 1542. Tribus] tribis H. 1546. ther] *om.* R.  
 1553. off] to H.

Holofernes too  
was decapitated  
by Judith for  
his drunken lust.

¶ Eek for his feruent dronken lecherie  
Olofernes be Iudith loste his hed;  
And al his host and al his cheualrie  
Lefte the feeld & fledde awei for dreed,  
And he lai bathed in his blood al red.  
Thus thoruh this vice, yiff it be weel souht  
Ful many a prynce hath be brouht to noult

1556

and many a  
prince has come  
to his end for  
this vice.

These said[e] stories ouhte inouh suffise,  
Yiff men wolde considre & taken heede,  
The grete vengauces in many sundri wise  
Which God hath take for this synne in dee  
As in ther bookis thei may beholde & reed  
Warnynges afforn, ful offte put at preeff,  
How thei hemsilff shal saue fro myscheef.

### Lenvoye.

This tragedy  
warns us that  
many princes,  
together with  
their regions,  
have been  
destroyed  
because of their  
dissolute habits.

THIS tragedie yeueth vs a gret warnyr  
Be cleer exaumples of manyfold reso  
How many a prince for ther mysleuyng,  
And many riche, roial, myhti toun,  
Many a cite and many a regioun  
Ha[ue] been euersid, ful notable & famous,  
For synne off pryncis that wer lecherous.

David, who slew  
Uriah that he  
might possess  
Bathsheba, was  
well punished  
for it,

The chose off God, Daudid the worthi kyng, 1576  
Prophete off prophetis, most souereyn off renoun,  
On Bersabe for a sodeyn lokyng  
To slen Vrie cauhte occasioun,  
For which he suffred gret punycioun, 1580  
Chastised off God, he and al his hous,  
For cause onli that he was lecherous.

and repented  
sorely, writing  
psalms of  
contrition to  
make amends  
for his  
transgression.

Gret repentaunce he hadde & gret sorwyng, [p. 164]  
And made psalmis off gret contricioun, 1584  
With woful teris & manyfold wepyng  
To make a-seeth for his transgression,  
Yeuyng to pryncis ful cleer direccioun  
For to eschewe\* the flatri odious 1588  
And the fals fraude off wommen lecherous.

1569. a] om. H.  
1573. 2nd a] om. R.  
1588. teschewe B.

- Wher was ther euere off science or cunning  
 So renommed as was kyng Salamoun?  
 Yit wommen made hym, thoruh[ther] fals flateryng,<sup>1592</sup>  
 To foreyn goddis doon oblacioun,  
 Which clipsid his honour & brouht his fame down,  
 That was in wisdam whilom most vertuous,  
 Til he thoruh wommen fill to be lecherous. 1596
- Is it nat eek remembrid be writyng,  
 Off Israel how the cheeff[e] champioun,  
 Which goddis peple hadde in his ledyng,  
 I meene the famous, myhti, strong Sampson, 1600  
 That thoruh his force to-rente the lyoun, —  
 But Dalida with teres plenteuous  
 His grace berafft hym & made hym lecherous.
- Sichem was slayn eek for the rauasshyng 1604  
 Off yong Dyna, as maad is mencioung;  
 His fader Emor brouh[t] to his eendyng,  
 Lost his richesse in that discencioun,  
 And his kyngdam brouht to destruccioun. 1608  
 Loo, heer the fyn off pryncis vicious,  
 Which them dispose for to be lecherous!
- It is in erthe oon the moste perelous thyng,  
 A prynce to been off his condicioun 1612  
 Effemynat, his wittis enclynyng,  
 Be fals desirs off flessfli mocioun,  
 To put hymself vnder subieccioun,  
 And thralle his resoun, tresour most precious, 1616  
 To onleeful\* lustis, hatful & lecherous.
- This is the sentence ful pleykli in menyng:  
 Wher women haue the dominacioun  
 To holde the reyne, ther hookis out castyng, 1620  
 That sensualite ha[ue] iurediccioun  
 To entre on resoun bi fals intrusioun,  
 Werre ageyn vertu most contagious,  
 To be venquysshid off lustis lecherous, — 1624
- It taketh fro men ther cleernesse off seyng,  
 Causeth gret siknessis and corrupcioun,  
 And to al vertu it is grettest hyndryng,

Who was there  
 ever more  
 famous for his  
 wisdom than  
 King Solomon?  
 Yet his honour  
 was darkened  
 by women.

Sampson yielded  
 to the tears of  
 Delilah,

and Shechem  
 was slain for  
 seducing Dinah.

It is perilous  
 for a prince to  
 be effeminate  
 and to allow  
 his reason to  
 become thrall  
 to unlawful  
 desires;

for where  
 women have  
 domination and  
 sensuality con-  
 quers virtue,

men become  
 corrupt in body  
 and grow old  
 before their  
 time.

1590. or] & R. 1591. Renoued H.  
 1592. ther], om. J, R. 1597. Is it] It is R. 1605. Off] As R.  
 1617. onleeful] thonleeful B, H, R, J.  
 1626. and] of H.

Maketh men seeme old, as be inspeccioun, 1628  
 Appallith ther mynde and disposicioun,  
 Shorteth ther daies, thyng dreedful & pitous,  
 Whan thei dispose hem for to be lecherous.

Noble Princes,  
 beware the  
 deception of  
 women,  
 especially  
 such as love  
 only for gain,  
 who like Sirens,  
 anoint your ears  
 with sugared  
 flattery.

Noble Pryncis, in your ymagynyng 1632  
 Conceyueth off wommen the fals decepcioun,  
 Namli off them that loue but for wynnyng,  
 And laboure ay for your possessioun,  
 Whos sugred flatrie is fals collusioun, 1636  
 Lik to Sirenes with vois melodious  
 Enoynte your eres to make you lecherous.

[How Cambises assentyng to the moordre of his  
 brothir Mergus at last slouh himsilf.]<sup>1</sup>

After Cyrus, his  
 son and heir  
 Cambyses came  
 complaining to  
 Bochas, that the  
 Egyptians were  
 idolaters and  
 worshiped Apis,  
 who was called  
 god of gods by  
 foole and slain  
 by his brother.

**A**FFTIR the deth of myhti kyng Cirus,  
 Next cam his sone callid Cambises, 1640  
 Heir be successioun ful victorious,  
 Which tofor Bochas put hymself in pres  
 And gan his compleynt — this is dout[e]les, —  
 That thei off Egipt, in many vnkouth wise, 1644  
 To sundri goddis dede sacrificise.

First onto Apis thei dede reuerence,  
 Callid Serapis, ther grettest god off all,  
 Regnyng in Egipt off most excellence, 1648  
 And god of goddis foolis dede hym call.  
 And off his noblesse thus it is befall,  
 Slayn bi his brother, which is a gret wonder,  
 Seuered on pecis & ful ferr cast assonder. 1652

As the Egyp-  
 tians held Apis  
 in such honour,  
 Cambyses  
 resolved to  
 throw down  
 all their temples;

And thei off Egipt made ther ordynaunces,  
 Vp peyne off deth in ther statutis olde,  
 A god to calle hym, & doon ther obseruaunces  
 Withynne his templis, lik as thei wer holde. 1656  
 Wheroff Cambises, toform as I you tolde,  
 Alle the templis off that regioun  
 Cast hym be force for to throwe down.

1629. and] and ther R.

1647. ther] the R.

1659. throwe] throw hem H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 68 recto.

- The temple off Iubiter to robbe it be rauyne,  
 Callid Amon, withoute excepcioun,  
 His knyhtis sente to brynge it to ruyne.  
 But thei echon for ther presumpcioun,  
 With sodeyn leuene wer smet & bete doun.  
 1660 and when he sent his knyghts to rob Jupiter Ammon, they were suddenly struck by a thunderbolt.  
 1664
- Wheroff Cambises, in Asie tho regnyng,  
 Hadde this drem as he lai slepyng.
- He drempte his brother, that called was  
 Mergus,  
 Sholde in the kyngdam afftir hym succede.  
 Wheroff in herte he wex so envious,  
 That he purposed, off rancour and hatreede,  
 Bi sum mene to make his sides bleede;  
 And that his purpos sholde take auail,  
 A magicien he took to his counsail.  
 1668 [p. 165] Cambyzes dreamt that he should be succeeded by his brother Smerdis and consequently resolved to kill him.  
 1672
- And he was holde a ful gret philisopfre,  
 Callid Cometes, ful sleiht and cunnyng,  
 To whom Cambises made a large proffre  
 Off gold and tresour to make hym assentyng  
 To execute this horrible thyng;  
 And that he wolde in most cruel wise  
 The moordre off Mergus compassen & deuse.  
 1676 He took counsel of a magician called Gometes and offered him great treasure for Smerdis' life.  
 1680
- And whil Cambises ordeyned this tresoun,  
 To slen Mergus, his owne brother deere,  
 God from aboue caste his eien doun,  
 Hym to pun[y]she in ful cruel manere:  
 1684 But God, who saw what was going on, punished Cambyzes with death,  
 1684
- For he wex wood[e], who-so list to lere,  
 Cauht a sharp suerd, & roff his thih on tweyne;  
 And sodenli he deied for the peyne.
- For too causes God took on hym vengeance,  
 As myn auctour Bochas doth expresse:  
 For his presumptuous fals disobeisaunce,  
 Spoilyng the goddis off her gret richesse,  
 And for the froward gret onkynd[e]nesse  
 To yeue assent to the contagious caas,  
 Whan that Mergus his brother moordred was.  
 1688 for two reasons: because he presumptuously despoiled the gods of their great wealth, and because of his unkindness to his brother Smerdis.  
 1692

1662. it] om. H.

1675. Comeres P — and] of H.

1686. thih] teth H.

War followed,  
and Persia stood  
disconsolate  
without an heir  
to the throne,  
although  
Gometes substituted  
his brother  
Oropastes  
(Smerdis the  
Magian) for the  
murdered  
Smerdis.

The deth off whom was cheeff occasioun  
Off ful gret werre, stryues and debat, 1696

Eek fynal cause whi al the regioun

Off myhti Perse stood disconsolat:

For heir was non, off hih nor low estat,

Be tittle off riht, thoruh this onhappi chaunce, 1700

To been ther kyng and ha[ue] the gouernaunce.

For the magicien callid Cometes,

Which slouh Mergus, as ye haue herd expresse,

Took his brother callid Oropastes, 1704

And made hym kyng, the stori berth witnessse,

Because that he resembled in liknesse

Onto Mergus off face and off stature,

To crowne hym kyng therfore he dede his cure. 1708

The death of  
Smerdis was not  
publicly known  
at first,

**T**HE deth off Mergus outward was nat knowe

Nor pleynli publisht in that regioun;

His bodi buried and cast in erthe lowe.

Off whom the moordre and fraudulent tresoun, 1712

The pitous slauhtre wrouht be collusioun,

And al the maner, bi processe was espied

So openli it myhte nat be denyed.

but later on a  
prince named  
Otanès sought  
to find out all the  
circumstances  
of the case,

And in what wise the noise gan out sprede 1716

Touchyng this moordre odious for to heere:

Whan that Oropastes ocupied in deede

The crowne off Perse, the stori doth vs lere,

Ther was a prynce ful notable & enteere, 1720

Callid Hostanes, that gan his witt applie,

Off hih prudence this moordre out tespie.

believing that  
Oropastes had  
no just right to  
the crown.

Whil that Oropastes, vnder a fals pretence,

Off Perciens was resseyued as for kyng, 1724

The said[e] prynce dede his deligence,

Bi inquisicioun to ha[ue] knowlechyng,

Be what engyn or be what sleihtyng

The said Oropastes cauhte occasioun 1728

In stede off Mergus to ocupie the crown.

1696. striffe R. 1697. whi] whi that R.

1698. disconsolat] consolate R. 1700. this] his R.

1701. kyng] heir R. 1702. Comares P.

1711. erthe] therth H. 1717. for] om. H.

1718. Oropastes J, R 3, P. 1721. Otanès P.

1723. Oropastes J. 1724. receyued was H.

1726. to haue] ta full H. 1728. Oropastes J.

On this mateer he hadde a coniecture,  
That his title was nouter hool nor cleer.  
The trouthe to trie he dede his besi cure, 1732  
And to serche out hooli the maneer,  
He souht[e] so ferr that he cam riht neer,  
And in this caas lettid for no slouthe,  
Till that he hadde founden out the trouthe. 1736

The cas was this, pleyntli to termyne:  
He hadde a douhter, ful fair off hir visage,  
Which off the kyng was cheuest concubyne,  
Bi whom he thouhte to cachchen auauantage. 1740  
And onto hir he hath sent his massage,  
Secreli tenqueren how it stood,  
Wher that the kyng wer come off Cirus blood.

Finally he discovered the truth through his daughter, who was the king's chief concubine.

And bad she sholde secreli taken heed, 1744  
Whil that he slepte to doon hir besi peyne  
With hir handis for to feele his hed,  
And to grope afftir bothe his eris tweyne.  
And yiff it fill — ther is no mor to seyne — 1748  
Vpon his hed that she non eris founde,  
To telle hir fadir, off trouthe as she was bounde.

He hade her secretly feel the king's head while he slept and see whether he had ears or not;

This myhti prynce Hostanes knew[e] weel, [p. 166]  
Riht as it is recorded be scripture, 1752  
Touchyng this caas how it stood euerideel,  
How kyng Cambises off sodeyn auenture,  
Bi his lyue for a forfeture,  
Made off Orapastes, the stori seith nat nay, 1756  
Bothe his tweyne eris to be kit away.

for Otanes knew that Oropastes had forfeited his ears as a punishment during Cambyses' reign.

And heerupon to be certefied,  
He was desirous ta[ue] ful knowlechyng.  
Which be his douhter whan it was espied, 1760  
Vpon a nyht liggyng bi the kyng,  
Gropyng his hed[e] as he lai slepyng,  
Ful subtili felte and took good heed,  
How he non eris hadde vpon his hed. 1764

It turned out that the king had no ears.

And to hir fadir anon she hath declarid  
The secrenesse off this auenture.  
And for no feer nor dreed he hath nat sparid,

So Otanes called the princes of Persia to a council,

1731. nor] ne H. 1733. serche] seche R. 1738. hir] om. R.  
1759. taful B. 1766. this] his R.

- How that it stood[e] pleyntli to discure. 1768  
 And first off all he dede his besi cure,  
 Alle the pryncis off Perse-lond ifeere  
 To counseil calle tentrete off this mateere.
- at which he told  
 them about the  
 murder of  
 Smerdis. And whan thei wern assemblid euerichon, 1772  
 Off Oropastes he told hem al the chaunce,  
 And how that Mergus was moordred yore agon,  
 As heer-toforn is put in remembraunce.  
 Wherupon to sette an ordynaunce 1776  
 And to redresse these wronges doon toforn,  
 Off Perse-lond wer seune pryncis sworn.
- Seven princes  
 were sworn to  
 dethrone  
 Oropastes. Off oon assent in ther entencioun,  
 Bi bond off oth thei made ther assuraunce, 1780  
 And a ful secre coniuracioun  
 To putte Oropastes from his roial puissaunce,  
 Which hadde al Perse vnder his gouernaunce  
 Bi a ful fals pretens off heritage, 1784  
 For he was lik to Mergus off visage.
- They took their  
 swords with  
 them, and,  
 forcing their  
 way into the  
 palace, attacked  
 the king, but  
 were at first  
 held off by his  
 brother, who  
 slew two of them. These seune pryncis, off which toforn I tolde,  
 Alle off oon herte, & bi ther oth ibounde, 1788  
 Prudent and manli and off yeris olde,  
 Han souht a tyme Oropastes to confounde.  
 And with ther suerdis sharp[e] whet & grounde,  
 Wonder couert in ther apparaile,  
 Cam off entent Oropastes to assaile. 1792  
 And in the paleis whom-euer that thei mette  
 Or ageyn hem made resistance,  
 Alle off accord thei fersli on hym sette.  
 But the magicien, that was ther in presence, 1796  
 Cam ageyn hem be sturdi violence,  
 And at thencountre gan hem so constreyne,  
 That off the pryncis thei haue islay[e]n tweyne.
- [Oropastes occupyng the crowne of Perce bi inuist  
 title was moordred.]<sup>1</sup>
- At last they  
 prevailed and  
 killed Oropastes  
 and all who were  
 in the palace. But fynali the tother pryncis fyue, 1800  
 Whan that thei sauh ther tweyne feeris bleede,  
 In al the paleis thei leffte non alyue.

1772. assemblid] assembled to gedre R. 1777. to] om. H.

1781. secre] sette R. 1786. These] The H.

1790. sharp whet swerdis &amp; grounde R — I grownde H.

1791. Wonder] Vndir H. 1792. for tassaile H.

1793. the] that H. 1798. thencountre] thentre H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. inner margin 68 verso.



And kyng Orapastes, quakyng in his dreede,  
 Ful onwarli, or that he took heede, 1804  
 Was slay[e]n ther, guerdoned for al his myht, —  
 Off pretens kynges which regne & ha[ue] no riht.

[How Dary obteynng the kyngdam of perse be  
 sleiht ended with shame.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR the deth of this magiciens  
 Was lefft no kyng to ha[ue] the gouernaunce, 1808  
 Nor for to reule the lond off Perciens,  
 Sauff pryncis fyue, ful famous off puissaunce,  
 Which made a statut and an ordynaunce  
 Off oon accord, be record off writyng, 1812  
 Theron concludyng who sholde be chose kyng.

After the death  
 of these magians  
 there was no one  
 to be king in  
 Persia save five  
 princes,

Ther sort, ther happē and al ther auenture  
 Was youe to Fortune off this eleccioun,  
 As thus: that prynce the crowne shal recure 1816  
 Among these fyue, be ther convencioun  
 For to gouerne the myhti regioun  
 And in that lond to regne & contune,  
 Lik as the fauour list ordeyne off Fortune. 1820

who agreed  
 to choose one  
 of themselves,

This was the statut: vpon a morwenyng,  
 Alle attonys erli for to ride  
 Atwen Aurora and Phebus vprisynge,  
 Vp to an hill to hou[e]n] and abide, 1824  
 Al rancour & discord set a-side,  
 Whos hors among hem was first herd neieng,  
 Withoute gruchchyng sholde be crownyd kyng.

in the following  
 manner: to ride  
 out early in the  
 morning up a  
 hillside and to  
 elect him king  
 whose horse  
 neighed first.

Vpon this mateer what sholde I lenger tarie? — 1828  
 Heeron was maad an oth in sekirnesse.  
 Among these pryncis ther was on callid Darie,  
 A prynce off Perse excellyng off noblesse,  
 Which hadde a seruauzt, the stori berth witnesse, 1832  
 That kept his hors, & thouhte in verrai deede  
 He wolde his lord preferre at such a neede.

One of the  
 princes, whose  
 name was  
 Darius, had a  
 servant who  
 thought he  
 would help his  
 master win.

1810. fyue princis R.

1812. Off] And H. 1814. happis H. 1816. As] And R.  
 1821. mornynge H. 1824. houen] hove H, P — abide] ta-  
 bide H.

1825. discorde & rancour H. 1834. a] om. R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 68 verso.

So on the day before the contest he let his master's horse come together with a mare on the same hillside, and when they rode there the next day, nature caused the horse to neigh loudly.

The said seruant, ful sleihti in werkyng,  
His deligence list nothyng to spare.

[p. 167]  
1836

The dai toforn[e] set off ther meetyng,  
At a place smothe, pleyn and bare,  
His lordis hors he made lepe a mare.

And on the morwe whan the pryncis mette  
On hors[e]bak, there his lord he sette.

1840

And whan the hors thedir cam ageyn,  
Nature anon afforced his corage  
To neie loude vpon the same pleyn,  
Wher-as the mare had vsid hir passage.

1844

Kynde in such caas hadde gret auauntage.

Be which[e] sleihte, pleynli to reherse,

The said[e] Dary was crownyd kyng off Perse.

1848

The princes made no contradiction, and, dismounting from their horses, said to Darius, "Long live the King!"

The pryncis alle, lik ther convencioun,  
Or Phebus shewed his firi bemys briht,  
Withoute striff or contradiccioun

From ther hors sodenli aliht;  
And onto Dari, as lowli as thei myht,

Saide in Greek[e] or thei vp aros,  
"Policronitudo Basileos!"

1852

Which is in Latyn, to speke in wordes pleyn,  
And in Inglissh, bexpownyng off scripture,  
Afftir the Greek, as moche for to seyn  
As, "long[e] tyme mote the kyng endure," —  
And lyue in helthe with good auenture,  
Bi the grace and fauour off Fortune  
Vpon al Perse to regnen and contune.

1856

1860

It is remarkable that a man should rise to be king by such means; but when Fortune favours, no one can say nay.

Who list considren eueri circumstaunce,  
It is a merueil nat groundid on prudence,  
Bi such a sleihte a kyng tagouernaunce,  
Thoruh title or cleyrn as off iust euidence,  
So to be reised to kyngli excellence.

1864

But whan Fortune fauoureth such assay,  
Till that she change, ther can no man sei nay.

1868

1835. sleihti] sleuhty R. 1836. nothyng] nat R.

1837. by forn H. 1841. lord] horse H.

1850. his] hir H — fire R.

1855. Polycromitudo P.

1856. in] om. R.

1866. or] of R.

- Thus was kyng Darie, born off louh lynage,  
 Set up be sleihte in estaat honourable.  
 Thouhte that he wolde for his auantage,  
 1872 To make his kyngdam & his regne stable,  
 To wedde such a wiff as to hym was most hable,  
 Demyng off trouthe his cleyrn wer weel amendid,  
 Off Cirus lyne yiff she were descendid. 1876
- To wedde suchon was al his couetise,  
 Stable for to regne vpon the Persiens.  
 And, as I fynde, in ful cruel wise,  
 Bi the counseil off fals magiciens 1880  
 A werre he gan vpon the Egipcien.  
 Eek folili he gan for to werreie  
 Them off Athenys, which list hym nat obeie.
- And, as myn auctour maketh rehersaile, 1884  
 He for his pride and fals presumpcioun  
 Was disconfited twies in bataile,  
 And neuer afftir, as maad is mencioniun,  
 He was nat had in reputacioun, 1888  
 Mong Persiens so gan his honour fade.  
 With sleihte he gan; with shame an eende he made.

[How Corolian bi Romayns exilid gan werre ayenst  
 hem and how aftir thei sent out his moder with  
 othir for pees, which had, thei eft him exilid &  
 aftir was slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

- A**FFTIR this Darie, as I reherse can,  
 1892 And myn auctour likith to conclude,  
 To Iohn Bochas cam Corolian,  
 The moste woful off al that multitude.  
 Which gan compleyne vpon thyngatitude  
 Off the Romeyns, how thei whilom in deede 1896  
 Exilid his persone, off rancour & hatreede.
- Which in his tyme wolde neuer cese,  
 Thoruh his noblesse and his hih renoun,  
 Ther comoun profit tawmente and encrese, 1900  
 And for to brynge to ther subieccioun  
 Many a cite and many a noble touen.

1876. she] he R.

1893. Coriolan P. 1894. al] om. H.

1902. 2nd a] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 69 recto.

- Yit thei ageynward, for al his cheualrie,  
Han hym exilid off malice and envie. 1904
- When he saw how unkind the Romans were, he went to the Tuscans and persuaded them to begin a war on Rome with his help. But whan this Marcus, callid Corolian, Sauh off Romeyns the gret onkynd[*e*]nesse, Toward a cuntre that callid was Tuskan Off hih disdeyn anon he gan hym dresse, 1908  
And hem entretid, off manli fell prowesse To gynne a werre, sithe thei so manli be, Thoruh his conveieng geyn Rome the cite.
- He told them that the Romans were torn by dissension and that they would win easily. And for to put hem mor in assuraunce, 1912  
To ha[ue] victorie thoruh ther hih renoun, He tolde hem pleyntli off a gret distaunce, Off a fals striff and a discencioun That was off newe falle in Rome toun; 1916  
Wherfor thei shulde, yiff it be prouided, Conquere hem lihtli, because thei were deuided.
- He assembled a great Tuscan army, and when it arrived before the city the Romans were overcome with fear, which is always the case when a kingdom is divided. Bi ther assent he made a gret arme, [p. 168]  
With stuff for werre richeli apparaid, 1920  
Pihte his tentis tofor that strong cite, And in the feeld stood prouidli [en]batailed. But the hertis off Romeyns han hem failed,  
And durst nat passe the gatis off ther toun, 1924  
Ther was among hem so gret deuysioun.
- Ther cite stood that tyme destitut,  
With feer surprised for lak off gouernaunce.  
Them to diffende thei fond[*e*] no refut, 1928  
So ferr enfeblisshid was ther old puissaunce. For euer gladli, wher striff & variaunce  
In any kyngdam haue an interesse,  
Touchyng diffence, \* a-dieu al hardynesse! 1932
- There can be no wise counsel where there is discord. Withynne hemsilff[*e*] thei stood at debat;  
Afforn ther enmyes redi for tassaile;  
Confort was non in hih nor low estat:  
For wher discord is, what counsail mai auaille? 1936  
Ther foon withoute, withynne hemsilff bataile,  
Brouht in, alas, to ther confusioun,  
Bi the fals serpent off discencioun.

1906. Sauh] Sauff R.

1909. fell] hih R, hygh H 5.

1921. afforn H — strong] gret R. 1922. batailed J.

1932. diffence] a diffence B, R, J.

1935. louh nor hih H.

- But at the laste afforced and constreyned,  
 Thei were coact[e] afftir pes to seeke.  
 The caas stood so: off nede thei wer peyned,  
 Maugre ther myht, ther hertis for to meeke.  
 And ther myscheeff mor tencece and eeke,  
 In awmentyng off ther cruel fatis,  
 Thei sauh ther enmyes briht armed at ther gatis.  
 Thei sent out first preestis off the touz  
 With ther enmyes for tentrete off pes,  
 With humble proffres & low subieccioun;  
 But Corolian, this is dout[e]les,  
 Ageyn the Romeyns was so merciles,  
 That grace non myht in his herte myne  
 To ther request his eris to encline.  
 Thanne the Romeyns, the stori telle can,  
 To Venturia made ther praier,  
 Which was the mooder off Corolian,  
 And to Volumia, his feithful wiff enteer,  
 That thei sholde bothe gon ifeer  
 Onto that prynce, besechyng at the leste,  
 Benygneli to heryn ther requeste.  
 His mooder first ful prudentli abraide,  
 Onto hir sone makyng this questioun,  
 At ther meetyng to hym thus she saide:  
 "Shal I," quod she, "for short conclusioun,  
 Off feithful herte and trewe affeccioun  
 To thi presence declare fynali,  
 Be now receyued as mooder or enmy?  
 Afftir thyn answer I mut myselff dispose  
 And my wittis speciali applie,  
 Cause off my komyng cleerli to onclose,  
 And telle theeffect of myn ambassiatric,  
 And my speche so gouerne and guie,  
 Afftir I am receyued to thi grace,  
 Mi-silff declaryng, yiff I ha[ue] tyme and space.  
 For lik thi mooder yiff thou receyue me  
 And me accepte onto thi presence,  
 I mut therafftir so gouerned be  
 To telle my tale pleykli, in sentence,—  
 So that thou yiff me freendli audience.  
 And yiff I be nat receyued in such wise,  
 Mor straung[e]lli my tale I mut deuise."

1940 So there was nothing to be done but sue for peace.

1944

1948 The Romans first sent out priests, but Coriolanus refused to listen to them.

1952

1956 Then his mother, and Volumentia, his wife, went to him and begged him to hear their request.

1960

Said his mother, "Am I to be received as mother or enemy?"

1964

1968 "My action must depend upon your answer.

1972

1976 "If you receive me as a mother, I will give you the message of the Romans in simple words, otherwise I must tell my tale more circumspectly.

1980

1980. be nat] om. R.

Coriolanus embraced his mother and said, "Madam, I receive you as my dear mother, but I intend nevertheless to chastise the Romans for their ingratitude."

This noble prynce, this Corolian,  
Whan that he herde his mooder thus compleyne,  
Ful lik a lord and a knyhtli man 1984

Gan hir enbracen in his armis tweyne  
In lowli wise, ther is no mor to seyne, —  
Sauf lik a sone, off due and off riht,  
To hire he saide ful lik a ientil knyht: 1988

"Madame," quod he, "be it to your plesaunce  
To heere my conceit as in this mater.  
With feithful herte and humble attendaunce  
I you receyue as for my mooder deer; 1992  
But, & ye like benygneli to heer,  
Thyngatitude, doon in most cruel wise  
To me off Romayns, I purpose to chastise."

"Ah son," said she, "their offence can be atoned for: you are of their lineage; let mercy modify your rigour."

"A sone," quod she, "touchyng ther offence 1996  
Doon to thi noblesse and ther gret outrage,  
Thei shal be menyng ther trespas recompence.  
And thynk[e] thou art born off ther lynage,  
And suffre that merci thi rigour mai asswage, 2000  
And thynk off nature thou maist nat weel withseie  
Thyng for the which thi mooder doth now preie.

"Do not begin a war against your country and destroy your own line in mortal strife!"

Thou shalt nat close thyn entrailes off pite [p. 169]  
To the requestis off me and off thi wiff, 2004  
Nor gynne a werre ageyn[e]s thi cuntre,  
To stroie thi lyne bi newe mortal striff,  
Thi childe and me to make vs lose our liff.  
Weie in ballaunce to Romayns thyn hatreede 2008  
Ageyns the loue off me and\* thi kenreede.

"Send your strange soldiers away, who are so ready to shed Roman blood. I will be hostage."

Send hom ageyn thi straunge soudiours,  
Which be so redi the Romayn blood to sheede;  
Lat stonde in pes our wallis and our tours; 2012  
Suffre thi grace thi rancour to exceede,  
So that thi pite mai putte awai al dreede,  
And condescende to receyue for hostage  
Me to be plegge for ther gret outrage. 2016

"Do not forget how I fed you at my breast when you were an infant."

Behold\* the wombe in which that thou wer born,  
And see also my naked brestes\* tweyne,  
Bi which thou were fostred heer-toform:

1982. Coriolan P.

1989. to] om. R — your] yow H, R 3, you H 5.

2002. Thyng] Thynk R.

2008. in] in a H. 2009. and] and off B, H, R, J.

2017. Beheld B. 2018. brestes] sides B, R.

Yiff ther was lak, thou woldest crie & pleyne. 2020  
 Remembre theron, and at me nat disdeyne,  
 But onto merci receyue this cite  
 At the request heer off thi wiff & me.

Whilom my mylk thi cherisshyng was &\* foode 2024 and how often I  
 To stynte thi cri whan thou dedist weepe, woke to make  
 Ther soote dropis ful holsum wer & goode, you sleep.  
 Thi tendre youthe for to preserue and keepe. "Have mind on  
 And lik a mooder to brynge the a-sleepe, 2028 my request.  
 I wook ful offte, to the I was so kynde, —  
 Wherfor, deere sone, on my request ha[ue] mynde.

Yiff that thou list this cite now tormente,  
 Ther demerites be rigour recompense, 2032 "If you must  
 Pun[y]she me for them, and I will assente repay the faults  
 To ber the gilt off ther gret offence. of this city  
 But, deere soone, lat thi magnyficence with severity,  
 Suffre off knyhtod that merci mai in deede punish me, who  
 2036 Attempre thi riht, or thou to doom procede. am willing to  
 bear the guilt.

Suffre Romayns to lyuen in quiete,  
 Graunt hem pes ageyn ther gret outrage, 2040 "Grant peace to  
 Sum drope off pite lat in thyn herte fleete, the Romans,  
 And thynk[e] thou art born off ther lynage. have pity on  
 Looke vpon hem with merciful visage, your kindred  
 Which offre hemsilff[e], as thei shal fulfille, who offer to  
 Ther liff, ther deth, al hooli at thi wille. 2044 submit to you.

Remembre off nature how that the leoun  
 Set a-side his rage and his woodnesse  
 To them that meekli aform hym falle doun;  
 His roial kynde will doon hem no duresse. 2048 "Remember  
 Texemplefie to thi knyhtli noblesse, how the lion  
 With rigerous suerd thou shalt no mor manace refuses to harm  
 Them that be lowli, yolde onto thi grace." those who fall  
 down meekly  
 before him."

And whan this prynce, this Corolian, 2052 Coriolanus  
 Had herd al that his mooder list to seyne, embraced his  
 He goth to hire in al the haste he can, mother weeping  
 Bespreynt with teris that on his chekis reyne, and at once  
 And hire enbracid in his armis tweyne, 2056 granted her  
 request.

2021. at] lat R.

2024. &amp;] &amp; thi B, H, R.

2036. merci] om. R.

And saide, "mooder, ther mai be no lettyng,  
Me off hool\* herte to graunte your axyng."

He raised the  
siege, sent his  
Tuscans home  
and was received  
back into Rome  
with joy.

The siege he made for tauoide awai,  
And to repaire hom to ther cuntre; 2060  
And with his mooder & wiff he was that dai  
With gret[e] gladnesse and solempnite  
Anon receyued into that cite,  
Lik as Fortune wolde hym neuer haue failed.\* 2064  
But she soone afftir off newe hath hym assailed.

But afterwards  
the fickle  
Romans  
banished him  
again, and he  
was then slain  
by the disap-  
pointed Tuscans.

The geri Romayns, stormy and onstable,  
Which neuer in oon stille koude abide, 2068  
Ageyn this prynce, most knyhtli and notable,  
For to conspire off newe thei gan prouyde,  
And ban[y]shed hym to Tuskan ther beside,  
Wher he was slayn withynne a litil space,  
For he the Romayns took affor\* to grace. 2072

[How Melciades duk of Athenys with smal noumbre  
venquysshed vj: M! perciens, and afftir bi his  
comonte that ay of custum desireth a change  
of princes newe he was cheyned in prisoun and  
so deied.]<sup>1</sup>

Duke Miltiades  
of Athens

**A**MONG other that put hemsilff in pres  
For to bewaile ther greuous heuynesse,  
Cam off Athenys duc Meltiades,\*  
Which thoruh his manhod & famous hih prowesse, 2076  
And thoruh his knyhtli renommed noblesse,  
Lich as auctours his tryumphes list comende,  
Fauht many a bataile his cite to diffende.

fought many  
a battle in de-  
fence of his city,

And off [his] victories,\* as it is compiled, 2080  
For comoun profit off that noble toun,  
Fauht with a tirant that was toforn exiled,  
Callid Hippias, which be fals tresoun

2058. off hool] hool off B, J, R.

2064. haue failed] assailed B. 2070. banyssh H — to] in H.

2072. took affor] affor took B, H, R, J.

2075. Melciades in B and other MSS., the common blunder of  
the copyists, c for t and vice versa.

2076. famous] om. R. 2077. renouued H.

2080. his] om. R — victoires B. 2082. afforne H, afor R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 69 recto.



- Hadde to kyng Darie maad a suggestioun, 2084  
 Vpon Athenys, in al the haste he myhte,  
 To reise al Perse ageyn that toun to fihte.
- Sexe hundred thousand acountid was the noum-  
 bre [p.170] and with ten thousand men  
 2088 defeated Hippias, an  
 Off Persiens, armed in plate and maile, exiled tyrant  
 Them off Athenys be force to encoumbre, who led an  
 Echon assemblid them proudli to assaile. army of sixty  
 But this duc for nothyng wolde faile, thousand  
 Meltiades, but knyhtli took his place: Persians.  
 2092 With ten thousand he met hem in the face.
- For bothe he was riht manli and riht wis,  
 And off his handis proued a good knyht. Miltiades put  
 Set vpon them with so prudent auys, them to fight  
 2096 four times,  
 That thei off Perce, for al ther grete myht,  
 Wer foure tymes put onto the flyht  
 Bi thilke duc, yiff I shal nat feyne,  
 And bi the noblesse off other knyhtis tweyne. 2100
- Themystodes icallid was the ton,  
 Which off his hand, as auctours list descryue,  
 Was in a feeld[e] prouyd on his fon  
 The manli[est] knyht in his tyme alyue. and with the  
 2104 help of Themistocles and a  
 Which thilke dai so proudli dede stryue knight called  
 Geyn them off Perse, & such a slauhter make, Cynaegeirus,  
 That fynali the feeld thei ha[ue] forsake. finally defeated  
 them.
- Cynegirus, a knyht eek off ther toun, 2108  
 The same dai thoruh his cheualrie,  
 With bloodi suerd, as he wente vp & doun,  
 Withoute noumbre in his malencolie,  
 Slouh Persiens, [as] bookis specefie, 2112  
 That for the tyme thei no refut cunne,  
 Sauff to ther shippis for dreed off deth thei runne.
2091. faile] falle H. 2092. but] om. R. 2093. he] om. H.  
 2094. For] om. R.  
 2095. knyht stuck in scribe's pen R.  
 2096. Set] Sep R.  
 2101. Themistocles P, as no doubt Lydgate wrote. The copyists  
 have perpetuated an early blunder of d for cl.  
 2102. handis H — auctours] bookes H.  
 2103. on] of H.  
 2104. manliest] manli J, R.  
 2106. Ageyn H.  
 2112. as] om. B, H, J, R, H 5, P.

- Cynaegirus held  
fast the largest  
Persian ship  
with his right  
hand, And ther he wrouhte a straunge gret mervail,  
As writ Bochas, affermyng in certeyne, 2116  
The\* grettest shipp that bar [the] largest sail,  
With his riht hand he gan it so restreyne,  
Lik as it hadde be fastned with a cheyne,  
Maugre Perciens, which dede hem sore greue, 2120  
That be no crafft thei koud nat make it meue.
- and when the  
Persians cut  
off his right  
hand he held the  
ship with his  
left hand, and But whan that thei non other refut wiste,  
Frelit tescapen] out off his daungeer,  
Till thei his riht hand heuh off bi the wriste. 2124  
But with his left hand he gan approche neer,  
And heeld it stille, an vnkouth thyng to heer,  
That he hadde force so gret a shipp to lette.  
But than, alas, his left hand off thei smette! 2128
- after they had  
cut off his left  
hand, he held  
the ship fast  
with his teeth,  
while the Greeks  
slew 200,000  
Persians. Yit maugre them, whan he ther malice seeth,  
Al-were-it so that he hadde lost ech hand,  
The shipp he heeld stille with his teeth,  
That thei ne myhte departe fro the land, 2132  
Lik as ther vessel hadde falle vpon a sand, —  
Causere that day, myn auctour doth reherse,  
Too hundred thousand wer slayn off them off Perse.
- Cynaegirus  
then went mad,  
and Bochas  
tells no more  
about him. And whan this synguler myhti champioun, 2136  
Cynegirus, most vnkouth off corage,  
Had doon this meruail, as maad is mencioun,  
Off verrai angwissh he fill into a rage:  
Lik a beeste furious and sauage 2140  
Ran a-boute, alas, for lak off mynde! —  
In Bochas book no mor off hym I fynde.
- Miltiades'  
subjects con-  
spired against  
him in spite of  
his victory But in this processe afftir I beheeld  
Ay how that Fortune can hir freendis faile: 2144  
For Meltiades, ledere off that feeld  
And gouernour off al that gret bataile,  
Causyng victoire, as maad is rehersaile, —  
Yit his people off malice and off ire 2148  
Ageyn his noblesse falsli gan conspire.
- and put him in  
prison. Thei off Athenys set hym in prisoun,  
And in cheynys myhtili hym bounde,  
Onkynd[e]li thei gaff hym this guerdoun, 2152

2117. 1st The] Ther B, H 5 — 2nd the] om. R, J, P.

2119. as] om. R. 2128. thei] the R.

2132. parte frome H. 2133. a] om. R.

For al the knythod [that] thei in hym founde.  
 Yit had he suffred many mortal wounde  
 In ther diffence and for ther libertees,  
 To saue ther lyues, ther toun & ther cuntrees. 2156

This was the eende off duc Meltiades,  
 Thoruh the constreynt off his stronge bondis. \*  
 Eek thei exilid the knyht Themystodes  
 Out off ther toun to lyue in straunge londis, 2160  
 That was so worthi preued off his hondis:  
 To shewe the chaung and mutabilite  
 Founde in Fortune and eueri comounte!

This was his  
 end; and  
 Themistocles  
 was banished.  
 Such is the  
 change of  
 Fortune!

[*Lenvoye.*]

**T**HE stormy trust off eueri comounte, 2164  
 Ther geri corages & troublid constaunce,  
 In this tragedie men mai beholde & see,  
 Now vp, now doun, as Fortune cast hir chaunce.  
 For thei off custum ha[ue] ioie & most plesaunce, 2168  
 In ther desirs onstedfast and ontrewē,  
 To seen ech day a chaung off pryncis newe.

Here men may  
 see how little  
 trust there is in  
 the people.  
 They are  
 forever wanting  
 a change of  
 princes.

Corolian off Rome, a cheeff cite, [p. 171]  
 Was ther protectour thoruh his myhti puissaunce: 2172  
 Venquissid ther enemies, set hem in surte,  
 Brouht in rebellis to ther obeisaunce.  
 But thei ageynward, off wilful variaunce  
 Ban[y]shed hym twies, & no cause knewe, 2176  
 Sauff for to seen a chaung off pryncis newe.

Coriolanus, the  
 protector of  
 Rome, was  
 twice banished;

The knyhtli noblesse, the magnanymyte,  
 The policie, the prudent gouernaunce  
 Off Meltiades, duc off the cuntre, 2180  
 Wher that Athenys is cheeff toun in substaunce, —  
 When he ther comoun gan most to auaunce,  
 The mor onkyndli, in honour that thei grewe,  
 Most thei wer besi to chaunge hym for a newe. 2184

Miltiades, a  
 very great man,  
 was set aside for  
 another;

2153. that] *om.* J, R, H, P, H 5.

2165. Ther] the H — &] & ther H. 2166. this] his R.

2171. Coriolan P.

2178. *The first four words of 6th stanza preceding are written above this line* H.

2180. the] that R. 2182. most] *om.* R.

2183. The] Ther R.

Themistocles,  
the sovereign  
knight of his  
time, was exiled.

Themystodes, hauyng the souereynte  
Off knyhtis alle that bar spere or launce,  
Duryng his tyme, — I tak no mor on me,  
For comparisouns doon ofte gret greuauce, — 2188  
Sexe hundred thousand he putte to vttraunce,  
Onto Athenys neuer founde ontrewre;  
Yit thei conspired his exil for a newe.

Nothing is  
stable, and  
especially the  
tenure of  
kings.

What thyng mai heer floure in felicite, 2192  
Or stonde stable be long contynuaunce  
In hih estatis outher in low degre? —  
Now flowe, now ebbe, now ioie, now myschaunce,  
Afftir Fortune holdeth the ballaunce. 2196  
And speciali, fals, feynyng and ontrewre,  
Comouns desir a chaung off pryncis newe.

Noble Princes,  
do not forget  
this in your  
prosperity.

Noble Pryncis, in your prosperite,  
On sodeyn chaungis set your remembraunce, 2200  
Fressshesse off floures, off braunchis the beute  
Haue ai on chaung a tremblyng attendaunce,  
In trust off comouns is no perseueraunce:  
As wynter [&] somer be dyuers off ther hewe, 2204  
So be thei dyuers in chaung off pryncis newe.

[Ho[w] xerses kyng of Perce, for his ravyne and  
couetise was dismembrid in smale pecys.]<sup>1</sup>

Next Xerxes  
came before  
Bochas,  
weeping  
piteously.

UN-TOFOR\* Bochas, ful pitousli wepyng,  
For to declare his dedli heuynesse,  
Cam Xerxes next, that was of Perse kyng, 2208  
And gan compleyne his dool and his distresse.  
Which in thre thynges, his stori berth witesse,  
And as the cronycle cleerli can vs telle,  
All othir pryncis in erthe he dede excelle: 2212

None other was  
of such high  
estate, so rich,  
or of so great  
dignity.

In hih estat was non so gret as he,  
Nouther in richesse nor worldli habundaunce,  
Nor non that tyme off so gret dignite;  
For as it is iput in remembraunce, 2216  
He hadde al Perse vnder his obeisaunce,  
Nor neuer prynce, as auctours do conlude,  
Hosteied attonyys with such a multitude.

2186. or] & H. 2189. vttraunce] variaunce R.

2202. Haue ai] havyng H.

2203 is repeated after 2200 H. 2204. &] om. H.

2206. Un-tofor] And tofor B, R, J. P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 70 verso.

- Space off fyue yeer he made his ordenaunce, 2220 His army  
Seuene hundred thousand people he dede reise; numbered  
Dempte off fals pride ageyn his gret puissaunce 700,000. He  
Non ertheli power myhte countirpeise. thought no  
earthly power  
could resist him.
- But summe auctours alowe hym nat nor preise, 2224  
Because that he, peeplis to encoumbre,  
Set al his trust to conquere with gret nombre.
- But manli pryncis han this opynyoun:  
In multitude stondest nat victorie; 2228 But manly  
princes know  
that victory  
does not depend  
on numbers.
- For knyhtli prowesse off eueri champioun,  
Which manli cast hem in armys to ha[ue] glorie,  
Enprentid hath fix in his memorie,  
Marcial tryumphes God ne doth nat shewe 2232  
In nombres grete no rather than in fewe.
- This said[e] Xerxes, be record off auctours,  
Had also, in cronycles as I reede,  
Thre hundred thousand straunge soudiours, 2236 Xerxes also  
had 300,000  
alien  
mercenaries.  
His armies  
covered the  
earth and  
levelled the hills  
and plains.
- Withoutyn othir, that wern off Perse & Mede.  
Which gan the erthe for to cure and sprede,  
Dried ryuers wher thei dede atteyne,  
Karff doun hillis and made valis pleyne. 2240
- This was cheeff conceit off his fantasies,  
To haue al erthe vnder subieccioun;  
Thouhte his power rauhte aboue the skies,  
Off surquedie and fals presumpcioun: 2244 He desired to  
have all the  
world subject  
to him: he  
even believed  
that he could  
rob God of the  
heavens; but  
the Lord will  
not suffer  
tyrants to reign  
long.
- For as he dempte in his opynyoun,  
How in his poweer pleyntli that it lai,  
Fro God aboue the heuene to take awai.
- But thilke Lord that can the meeke enhau[n]se, 2248  
And from ther sees the proude putte doun,  
A[nd] namli them that ha[ue] no remembraunce  
To aduertise off wisdam and resoun,  
To knowe the Lord, most myhti off renoun, — 2252  
The Lord off Lordis, which, pleyntli to compile,  
Will suffre tirantis to regne but a while.
- And oon the merueile that euer I dede reede, [p. 172] Xerxes made a  
Grettest and vnkouth pleyntli onto me, 2256 great bridge  
Is how Xerxes, kyng off Perse and Mede, from Asia to  
Europe —  
For to shewe a special syngulerte,

2222. gret] fals R.

2236. straunge] strong H. 2250. And namli] Anamly R.

2251. aduertise] aduersit H. 2252. renoun] resoun R.

- Out off Asie, ouer the Grete Se,  
As seith myn auctour, whom I dar alegge, 2260  
Into Europe made a myhti bregge.
- a marvel that some men perhaps will not believe—but things that seem impossible can nevertheless be accomplished; Sum men paraunter will therat disdeyne,  
And seyn it is a merueile nat credible;  
Yit craft in cas to such thyng mai atteyne, 2264  
Which bi nature semeth an impossible:  
And, as to me, it is a thyng odible,  
Thynges tenpugne, awtentik and olde,  
Which notable clerkis in ther daies tolde. 2268
- and it is not nice to doubt the words of notable scholars. These newe men that han but lital seyn,  
Nouther expert in craft nor in nature,  
For lak off resoun holde al such thyng weyn,  
Thouh that it be remembred in scripture. 2272  
For eueri meruail and eueri auenture  
Is\* straunge to hym, as I reherse can,  
That lakketh the cause wherof the ground began.
- Xerxes also had possession of Egypt and prepared to make war on the Spartans, This said[e] Xerxes hadde eek possessioun, 2276  
Be the title off his fader Darie,  
Off al Egipt, as maad is mencioung;  
But thei off Grece were to hym contrarie:  
Wherfor he caste no lenger for to tarie, 2280  
This proude prynce, but myhtili werreie  
Lacedemonoys, which wolde hym nat obeie.
- whom Demaratus warned and supplied with information written on tablets beneath a smooth surface of wax. But oon that was callid Demaratus,  
Which off that cuntre hadde aform be kyng 2284  
And was exilid, the stori tellith thus,  
That tyme with Xerxes in houshold abidyng,  
Which loued that lond, for al his exilyng,  
Gaff them warnyng, to saue hem fro myschaunce, 2288  
Off Xerxes poweer and al his ordenaunce.
- He wrot hem lettres grauen in a table,  
All themprises\* off Xerxes, out off doute,  
Off al his stuff and people incomparable, 2292  
And off his noumbre and his gret[e] route.

2260. alegge] wele legge H. 2261. a] om. R, H.

2262. ther at parawntir wil H.

2265. an] om. R — impossible R. 2272. that] om. R.

2274. Is] Is to B, J, R.

2284. afore hadde R. 2285. And] he H — thus] vs R.

2291. themprises] thenterprises B, R, J, H 5.

2292. Off] &amp; H. 2293. 2nd and] &amp; of H, R 3.

- The which[e] table curid was withoute  
 Ful\* subtili with wex iplanyd pleyn,  
 That off his sonde ther was no lettre seyn. 2296
- Thus was thentent off Xerses first discurid  
 Onto the Grekis, and al his fel\* werkyng. The Greeks  
 were captained  
 by Leonidas,  
 But in o thyng thei gretli wer assurid,  
 Off trust thei hadde bi expert knowlechyng 2300  
 In Leonidas, ther noble famous kyng,  
 Which among Grekis, off prowessse & forsiht,  
 Was in tho daies holde on the beste knyht.
- Off cheualrie callid the lode-sterre, 2304 their best  
 knight,  
 The sunne off knyhtod, that shon so briht & sheene,  
 The berere up, bothe in pes and werre,  
 And strengest piler his parti to meynteene,  
 The Grekis riht hand ther noblesse to susteene, 2308  
 Charboncle off armys, merour off policie,  
 And surest capteyn a feeld to reule & guie.
- And as myn auctour remembreth in his book,  
 How in this cas he was nat rech[e]les, 2312 who led four  
 thousand men  
 to Thermopyle,  
 But in al haste foure thousand men he took,  
 To lette the weies and comyng off Xerses.  
 And bi an hill callid Termophiles,  
 Wher Persiens began first ther viage, 2316  
 He knyhtli caste to stoppe ther\* passage.
- And secreli espieng the comyng  
 Off kyng Xerses with strong apparaile,  
 He, lik a knyht, made no tarieng, 2320  
 Ches out sexe hundred, armed in plate & maile,  
 Which in such cas myhte most auaille,  
 And in diffence and helpe off ther cuntre  
 Wolde rather deie than from the feeld to fle. 2324
- And couertli thei took[e] ther loggyng,  
 And kept hem cloos, till it drouh to nyht.  
 And at ther dyner themsilff refresshyng,  
 So as thei sat, in steel armed briht, 2328  
 The kyng abraide lik a manli knyht,

2294. curid] coverid H.

2295. Ful] For B — pleyned R. 2298. fel] fals B, J, R.

2303. Was hoolde in tho daies R.

2310. surest] fairest H.

2313. al] al be H. 2316. viage] visage R.

2317. ther] the B, H.

Into the feeld aforn thei shulde gon,  
Riht thus he saide among hem euerichon:

"Sirs, dine well,  
and like good  
warriors be pre-  
pared to sup at  
night with the  
gods of the  
aether world,"

"Sires," quod he, "now dyneth merili,  
And with good wyn afforceth your corage,  
Lik goode knyhtis in purpos fynali,  
For liff nor deth nat turnyng your visage,  
But off assent, cast in your passage,  
As ye heer dyne now in especiall,  
To suppe at nyht with goddis infernall.

2332

2336

holding together  
without fear,

This is to meene, ye shul your liff iupartē, [p. 173]  
As hardi knyhtis, proudli to prouide  
Withynne the feeld assonder nat departe,  
But keep you cloos, & for no dreed deuide.  
Desir off worshepe make to be your guide,  
Your expert noblesse eternali tauaunce  
Be quyk report off newe remembraunce.

2340

2344

and having in  
your hearts only  
hope and good  
trust of victory.

And hath this dai nothyng in memori[e],  
Nouther your richesse, your blood nor your kenreede,  
Sauff onli hope and good trust off victorie,  
And hardi prowessse you to conducte and leede.  
And thynkith knyhtli what shal be your meede,  
With marcial palmys your renoun & your name  
In the hiest place set in the Hous off Fame.

2348

2352

"Though you  
are but few in  
number,  
remember that  
so long as you  
stand united you  
are invincible."

And thouth ye been but a fewe in noubre,  
Lat in your hertis o thyng be fantasied:  
Whil dyuysioun doth you nat encoumbre,  
Victorie in armys mai you nat be denyed;  
For nothyng is to conquest mor applied  
Than trewe accord among your-silff to shewe,  
Thouth ye in noubre be [founde] but a fewe."

2356

Comforted by  
these words,  
they fell on the  
Persians in their  
tents at eve,

By\* this counseil syngulerli notable,  
And be this kynges knyhtli\* good language,  
Thei reconforted heeld themsiluen\* able  
Ageyn ther fomen to holden ther passage.  
And first off all, off hertli proud corage,

2360

2364

2339. is] *om.* H.2342. you] *om.* R — you cloos] to gedir H.

2347. nor] ne R. 2349. conduct] conduyt H.

2359. founde] *om.* R, J — a] *om.* J.

2360. By] But B, But bi R, J.

2361. kynges knyhtli] knyhtis kyngli B, R, J.

2362. themsiluen] themsilff B.



The Perciens mor mortali to greue,  
Withynne ther tentis thei fill on hem at eue.

Thei off Perce idrownyd were with wyn;  
This to seyen, \* thoruh ther gret excesse  
Thei lai and slepte lik as dronke swyn,  
Ther wach nat kept: loo, how that dronkenesse  
Causeth offte, off verrai reklesnesse,  
Ful many a man, that wil nat take keep,  
For to be moordred anyhtis in ther sleep.

2368 when, drowned  
in wine, they lay  
unguarded and  
sleeping.

And as this kyng dede his knyhtis leede,  
The Percien tentis assailyng sodenli,  
Or thei wer war or token any heede,  
Them for taffraie thei made an hidous cri.  
Diffence was noon vpon ther parti;  
For men mai knowe bi olde experience,  
In folkis dronke mai be no resistance.

2372  
2376 With a hideous  
cry they rushed  
on

Out off noumbre thei slown off ther foon,  
And cesed nat off al the longe nyht,  
Till on the morwe that the sunne shoon,  
That to beholde it was an ougli siht.  
And proude Xerxes put anon to fliht —  
Euer the laste that wolde his foon assaile,  
And ay the firste that fledde in bataile!

2380 and slew  
without ceasing  
all the long  
night.

In his fliht so faste awei he ran,  
For theryn was hooli al his trust! —  
And off gret trauaile anon this Xerxes gan  
Off coward dreed to han so gret a thrust,  
So drie he was, off salt sond and off dust.  
And bi the weie serchyng ferr nor neer,  
He nouthor fond welle nor reuer.

2388 Proud Xerxes  
fled as fast as he  
could, and,  
overcome by  
thirst,

Off auenture a meri ground he fond,  
The water trouble and bloodi off colour;  
And Xerxes ther drank water with his hond,  
Hym to refresshe in his dedli labour.  
And, as he thouhte, he neuer drank licour  
To hym mor holsom, so streiht[e] stood the caas, 2400  
Confect with spices, pyment nor ypocras.

2396 drank blood-  
stained water  
from a marsh.

2368. þis is H — seyne B. 2370. Ther] The R.

2385. proude] om. H — to] to the H.

2393. nor] or H, and P, R 3. 2394. nor] ne H, R 3.

2395. meri] myry H, R 3, miry P, mery J, R, H. 5.

2401. nor] or H.

This was his  
first defeat,  
from which men  
may see that  
Fortune has no  
respect for the  
great possessions  
and might of  
princes who  
refuse to know  
God.

This was the firste myscheeff and the dreed  
In which that Xerxes, the myhti prynce, stood.  
Heer men mai see, such as list take heed, 2404  
How geri Fortune, furious and wood,  
Wil nat spare, for richesse nor for good,  
Mihti pryncis, which list nat God to knowe,  
From ther estatis to brynge hem doun ful lowe. 2408

With new  
presumption  
Xerxes proposed  
to rob the  
temples of the  
gods,

¶ O hatful serpent of hih presumpcioun,  
Ay onstaunchable with gredi vsurpyng,  
Be newe trouble, off fals sedicioun,  
Which list off pride receyue no warnyng: 2412  
For now Xerxes, off Perse & Mede kyng,  
Purposid hath with odious appaiaile  
The temple off goddis contagiousli tassaile.

For as hym thouhte, it myhte nat suffise, 2416  
To gret exauple off his outraious pride,  
How heer-toforn God dede hym chastise  
Bi manys hand, to sette his pompe a-side.  
But now off newe he gan ageyn prouide, 2420  
Bi sacrilege his myhti hand to dresse,  
To spoile Appollo and reue hym his richesse.

and sent four  
thousand men

Ther was in Delos a temple thilk[e] dai, [p. 174]  
Most statli bilt and set up be masouns, 2424  
Gret ymages, reliques, riche arai  
Off gold and stonys in sundri mansiounz;  
And ther Appollo to sundri questiounz  
Gaff redi answere, the stori tellith thus, 2428  
And he was callid Appollo Delphicus.

to pillage the  
shrine of the  
Delian Apollo.

Fourz thousand men Xerxes thedir sente,  
Bi his auys chose out for the nonys, 2432  
Ful clenli armed; & as thei thedir wente  
To spoile the temple off gold and riche stonys,  
With sodeyn leuene thei wer brent, flesh & bonys,  
With tempest, thunder, hail & hidous reyn  
Consumpt echon and neuer afftir seyn. 2436

But great Apollo  
in his indignation  
consumed them  
with lightning.

The grete Appollo, which shyneth briht in heuene,  
Hadde off this Xerxes gret indignacioun,  
Which made his peple be consumpt with leuene,

2406. nor] ne R. 2408. to] om. H.

2417. outraious] contrarious R.

2428. answers R. 2434. thei] the R.

2435. tempest] om. H. 2439. be] to be H.

- In cruel punshyng off his presumpcioun. 2440  
 Yit he purposed, to his confusioun,  
 Sithe on the lond he nothyng myhte wynne,  
 Vpon the se a werre to begynne.
- Gan to make so gret an ordenaunce, 2444  
 That his nauie couered al the se:  
 Yit Neptunus thouhte hym nat tenhaunce,  
 Withynne his\* boundis to ha[ue] no liberte;  
 For Themystodes with a smal meyne, 2448  
 Beside a cite callid Salamyne,  
 Hym & his shippis brouhte onto ruyne.
- Yit, as I fynde, this proude kyng Xerxes  
 Hadde on his parti Themydora, the queene 2452  
 Off Halcarnois, which put hirselff in pres,  
 Armed in platis that shon ful briht and sheene.  
 And thenarme off Xerxes to susteene,  
 This womman fauht[e] lik a fell woluesse, 2456  
 And many Greek that dai she dede oppresse.
- It was a straunge merueil for to heere,  
 To seen a woman so sturdi off visage;  
 Yit men expert aldai may seen and lere, 2460  
 Thei be bi nature ful cruel off corage,  
 And no cowardis founde off ther language.  
 Sett at assai, and thanne it shal be seene,  
 Wher thei be feerful ther quarel to susteene! 2464
- Thei mai off meeknesse shewe a fair pretense, —  
 Sum serpent is off colour siluer sheene,  
 And summe floures, ful fressh off apparence,  
 Growe on thistles rouh[e], sharp and keene, 2468  
 And summe that been angelic to seene,  
 And verai heuenli, with ther golden tressis,  
 Been at a preeff[e] verrai leonessis.
- To seyn the sothe, a poore man mai be shent, — 2472  
 I dar no mor[e] speke off this mateere. . . .  
 But kyng Xerxes, for al his proude entent,  
 Al his nauie and his people ifeere  
 Wer put to fliht & outraied off ther cheere. 2476

Xerxes next began a war on the sea, but his ships were scattered by Themistocles at Salamis,

although he was aided by the queen of Halicarnassus, who fought like a she-wolf.

It was a strange thing: yet every day men may see that women are no cowards, — at least, of their words.

Some serpents gleam like silver, bright flowers grow on thistles, and some women who look like angels are on occasion veritable lionesses.

But as a poor man may be ruined for telling the truth, I'll say no more. King Xerxes himself was badly wounded.

2445. nauie] name R.

2447. his] hir B, H, J, hyr H 5, her R. 2448. Themistocles P.

2455. And thenarme] The army P.

2461. Thei be bi] Thai beene of H, bei be of R 3.

2462. off] at H. 2464. quarellis H.

Ther shippis drownyd among the wawes rude,  
That non abod off al that multitude.

but again he  
summoned his  
forces against  
the Greeks.

Kyng Xerxes hurt and woundid mortali,  
Onnethe he myhte the grete peyne endure; 2480  
His quakyng herte quit hym so cowardli, —  
On se and lond such was his auenture.  
And yit ageyn his damages to recure,  
Thre hundred thousand off fiteres he gan call, 2484  
Vpon Grekis off newe for to fall.

Themistocles,  
knowing what  
a coward he  
was, informed  
him that his  
bridge was  
broken,

A myhti duc callid Mardonyus  
Was capteyn maad his peepel for to leede;  
But Themystodes, myn auctour tellith thus, 2488  
Knowyng off Xerxes the cowardise & dreede,  
A lettre made for to be sent in deede,  
Enfourmyng hym, bi Grekis gret outrage  
How off his bregge was broken the passage. 2492

and Xerxes fled  
in a boat with  
one servant,

Off which[e] merueil whan ther cam tidyng  
To kyng Xerxes, he afftir anon riht,  
As he that was aferd[e] off ech thyng,  
Ful lik a coward took hym to the fliht. 2496  
Fledde in a boot, lik a coward knyht,  
Off al his peepel ther wer no mo iseyn  
Tawaite vpon hym, sauff a chamberleyn.

his army  
dispersed and  
dying of  
privations.

Al his peepel departed heer and yonder, 2500  
Stondyng in myscheeff and gret indigence;  
To many a coost thei wente and rood asonder,  
Pyned with hunger, lakked ther dispence,  
Punshed also with onwar pestilence, 2504  
Feeble off trauaile myhte nat endure  
For impotence to karien ther armure.

The roads were  
full of dead  
bodies, the soil  
stained with  
blood and the air  
polluted.  
Ravenous fowls  
fed upon the  
corpses.

Alas ech wai[e] lai ful off careynes; [p. 175]  
The soil with blood[e] steyned & the greene; 2508  
The hair terrible off pathes & off pleynes,  
That no man myhte endure it nor susteene,  
The sauour was so odious and oncleene.

2485. off] *om.* R. 2488. thus] *vs* R. 2490. be] *om.* H.

2498. wer] was H. 2499. sauff] but H.

2502. rode & went R. 2503. payned H.

2508. steyned] soiled H.

2510. That no man myht] þat men myht nat H — myht  
endure it] myht it endure R.

2511. The] ther H — sauour] fauour R — and] & so R.

- Raueynous foulis, ful homli in ther siht,  
Themsilff to feede vpon the corps aliht. 2512
- Thre hundred thousand off Perciens wer slayn,  
Which Mardonyus afor ful proudli ladde.  
Off which[e] tidyng kyng Xerxes was nat fayn, 2516  
But for distresse and sorwe gan to madde.  
An[d] oon the laste myscheeff that he hadde,  
Was whan Thymon, a noble Grekissh knyht,  
Xerxes disconfited & put his men to fliht. 2520
- This Thymon was sone to Meltiades,  
His fadir whilom off Athenes kyng,  
Which last off all outraied hath Xerxes, —  
Sauf off his eende ther fill a-nother thyng: 2524  
Artabanus, ful slehti in werkyng,  
Which to Xerxes was nat suspect in deede,  
Compassid his deth, in Bochas as I reede.
- This Artaban was prouost off his hous 2528  
And an officer most especial, —  
With his seuene sonys strong & despitous,  
Vpon a nyht furious and fatal,  
Fill vpon Xerxes in his paleis roial. 2532  
And in his stori as it is remembrid,  
On pecis smale thei han hym al dismembrid.
- This was off Xerxes the laste fynal meede,  
Off his hih pride the funeral guerdoun;  
From his too kyngdamys off Perse & [eek] Mede 2536  
Froward Fortune hath hym plukked down.  
What mai auaille the dominacioun  
Off such pryncis as holde hemseluen evene 2540  
For to been egal with goddis hih in hevene?
- Men list nat knowe such chaunges for no preeff,  
A[nd] namli pryncis in ther gret puissaunces.  
Geyn ertheli pereiles & al worldli myscheeff 2544  
Thei can prouide hem & set\* ordynaunces,  
As thei that dreede Fortunis variaunces;  
But to Godward thei take litil heede,  
For the gret richesse which thei do possede. 2548

Three hundred thousand Persians were slain,

and Timon, son of Miltiades, completed their discomfiture.

Not long after, Artabanus and his seven sons fell upon Xerxes in his palace and slew him.

Thus ends the lordship of princes who consider themselves equal to the gods in heaven.

They take little heed to God, although careful enough to guard themselves against worldly mischance.

2513. aliht] lihte H. 2517. to] forto R.  
2519. Cymon P — grekis R. 2521. Cymon P.  
2523. hath] om. R. 2529. speciall H.  
2537. eek] om. J, R 3, eke of P, eek of H 5.  
2543. And] A R — gret] om. R, J.  
2545. set] settyn B. 2548. richesse] myscheff H.

- If they hear  
of an earth-  
quake they flee,  
and if a
- Yiff thei mai heren off an erthe-quaue  
Toform it falle, or any tokne see,  
Than will thei gon anon themsilff to saue  
Out off ther houses, & from ther toun[e]s flee, 2552  
To putte ther liff the mor in surete,  
List ther beeldyng, maad off gret costage,  
Fill vpon hem in that mortal rage.
- horse run away  
they will put  
him under a  
padlock, but  
small care do  
they take of  
their own soules.
- Or yiff an hors ronne out off his stable, 2556  
Breke his coleer thikke, double & long,  
Men will ordeyne a lok off iren able  
To keepe hym in, be he neuer so strong.  
And thus men can redressyn eueri wrong 2560  
Touchyng the bodi, bi gret avisynesse;  
Sauf for the soule thei will nothyng redresse.
- If a river  
overflows its  
banks they  
endeavour to  
change its  
course,
- Whan a ryuer passeth ferr his boundis,  
Boilith vpward, fynt no resistence, 2564  
Wynneth land & ouerfloweth groundis,  
Drowneth toun[e]s with his violence, —  
Yit men will trauaile to fynden a diffence;  
To turne his cours sum weie shal be souht, 2568  
But toward God men thynke lite or nouht.
- and against  
illness they use  
all manner of  
medicines, but  
to God they look  
for no remedy.
- Ageyn siknesse men seeke medicynes,  
Letuaries and dyuers pociouns,  
Serche in phesik sundri disciplynes 2572  
Them to diete in ther transgressiouns,  
Restoratyves and eek confeccions,  
But onto Godward, in this present liff,  
Men nat trauaile for no confortatiff. 2576
- They will  
undergo the  
utmost fatigue  
and hardship to  
win treasure and  
put their lives  
in peril for  
things that are  
transitory,
- Men ther bodies will putten in distresse  
Off fals desir and coueitous feruence,  
Onli tacroche and wyne gret richesse,  
Suffre cold, labour and violence, 2580  
And nouthr spare for gold nor for dispence  
To vndirfonge pereilles\* off veynglorie,  
Onli for thynges that be transitorie.
- sailing by  
unknown seas  
and fighting  
many a battle;
- Thei passe mounteyns & many hidous roche, 2584  
In hope it sholde to ther entent auaille,  
To many mortal monstre thei approche,

2549. an] one R. 2550. toknes H. 2552. housen H.

2562. redresse] dresse H.

2575. this] his R. 2581. 2nd for] om. H.

2582. pereilles] peynes B.

And be many vnkouth se thei saile,  
Iupartē ther liff in werre and in bataile, 2588  
Be many daunger & many streiht thei ride  
For worldli tresour, which shal no while abide.

But toward goodis that be perdurable, [p. 176] but towards  
Ful lite or nouht ther hertis thei enclyne; 2592 eternal possessions they  
Nor to the heuenli cuntre most notable, never look.  
Thei wil nat lefft up nouthē hed nor chyne, —  
Toward the speeris off Phebus & Lucyne,  
Castyng ther stremys to vs fro so ferrē, 2596  
Which to considre all worldli men doon errē.

What myhte auaille the grēte couetise  
Off kyng Xerxes in [his] estaat roial? Of what avail  
Or the gret peeple, which ye han herd deuise, — 2600 was the  
Ten hundred thousand; — the peeple was nat smal. ambition of  
But, for al that, he hadde an hidous fal, Xerxes! What  
Whan that he was, as is toforn remembrid, did his million  
On pecis smale pitousli dismembrid. men accomplish? 2604

### ¶ *Lenvoye.*

**T**HIS tragedie put vs in remembraunce  
Off thonsekir flatryng & blyndnesse  
Bothe off Fortune & off hir variaunce,  
And off hir ougli froward doubilnesse, 2608  
In Xerxes shewed, for al his gret richesse, —  
To vs declaryng, pleyntli in figure,  
A raueynous pryntce mai no while endure.

Kyng Xerxes hadde vnder his obeisaunce 2612  
Al Perse & Mede, the stori berth witnessse;  
Thouhte al erthe to lital in substauce  
To stauche the etik off his gredynesse,  
A frett off hauyng put hym in such distresse. 2616  
Whos fyn declarid, bi record off scripture,  
A raueynous pryntce mai no while endure.

He made also an odious ordenaunce,  
Off surquedie his poweer for to dresse, 2620  
To robbe the goddis, maugre ther puissaunce,  
And spoile ther templis, off froward wilfulnesse,

2593. cuntre] company R. 2596. fro] frome H — so] om. R.  
2600. ye] om. R. 2603. is] om. R. 2609. grete] om. R.  
2621. the] ther R.

Take ther tresours ageyn al rihtwisnesse.  
 But thei hym shewed, off sodeyn auenture, 2624  
 A raueynous prynce mai no while endure.

but great Apollo  
 took vengeance,  
 and God will  
 not suffer such  
 men to last long.

Grete Appollo took on his men vengauce  
 With onwar tempest, for al ther sturdynesse,  
 Leuene and thunder brouht hem to myschaunce, 2628  
 Guerdoun most hable ageyn ther gret falsnesse, —  
 In pryncis hertis, pleyntli to expresse.  
 Who be raueyne richessis will recure,  
 God wil nat suffre hym longe to endure. 2632

Noble Princes,  
 think often of  
 the fall of proud  
 Xerxes; avoid  
 robbery and  
 ravin, and you  
 shall endure.

Noble Pryncis, stable in your constaunce,  
 Ye that desire to stonde in sekirnesse,  
 Remembreth ofte vpon the fatal chaunce  
 Off proude Xerxes and his cursidnesse, 2636  
 Your-silff disposyng in your hih noblesse,  
 Yiff that ye list your statis to assure,  
 Escheweth raueyne & ye shal longe endure!

[How Artabanus moordred kyng xerxes and how  
 aftir himsilf was moordred.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas would  
 have put aside  
 his pen, had  
 not Artabanus,  
 the murderer of  
 Xerxes,  
 appeared before  
 him.

**N**EXT these tragedies, wepyng & dolerous, 2640  
 Whil Bochas stynte, & wolde ha been in pes,  
 A knyht appered callid Artabanus,  
 Which hadde afor[n]e moordred kyng Xerxes;  
 And gan his compleynt for to putte in pres, 2644  
 Ful concludyng, to speke in wordes pley[n],  
 Who vseth moordre, bi moordre he shal be slayn.

Artabanus,  
 Xerxes' provost,

This Artabanus, be record off wrytyng,  
 With Xerxes prouost whilom, as I reede, 2648  
 Falsli conspired be sleihte off his werkyng,  
 For to be kyng bothe off Perse & Mede,  
 Hauyng seuene sonys, which that wer in deede  
 Worthi knyhtis, manli and riht strong, 2652  
 Al-be ther fader was set to do gret wrong.

presumed to  
 usurp the throne  
 of Persia, and  
 after Xerxes'  
 death

For he presumed bi vsurpacioun,  
 In Perse and Mede to quench the cleer[e] liht,  
 And trouble the lyne off iust successioun: 2656

2629. hable] om. H — ageyn] geyn J, gein P.

2631. richesse R. 2636. his] of his R.

2640. dolorous H.

2641. Whil] Whan R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 73 recto.



- For so as he off force and nat off riht,  
 Nothyng rasembyng to a trewe knyht,  
 The moordre off Xesses falsli dede ordeyne,  
 Riht so he caste to moordre his sonys tweyne. 2660
- And to concludre pleyntli and nat tarie,  
 The said[e] kyng that callid was Xesses,  
 Hadde too sonys, the yongest callid Darie,  
 And the tother named Artaxerses, 2664  
 Which, as the stori reherseth dout[e]lles,  
 Wer be discent bor[e]n for to succede,  
 Afftir ther fader to regne in Perse & Mede.
- The moordre off Xesses outward was nat knowe, 2668 He told Artaxerses that  
 Nor how Artabanus hadde the tresoun wrouht,  
 Till afftirward withynne a litil throwe  
 He hadde off newe forged out & souht  
 Fals odious treynes that wer neuer thouht: 2672  
 Tolde Artaxerses, as he gan with hym rowne,  
 How Darie caste to ocupie the crowne,
- And how the deth off Xesses was ordeyned · [p. 177] and that he  
 Onli be Darie and be noon othir wiht. 2676 had been the  
 Wherupon, which auhte be compleyned,  
 Artaxerses prouyded anon riht  
 The slauhtre off Darie; & so, ageyn al riht,  
 This yonger brother in his innocence 2680  
 Was falsli slayn, and dede non offence.
- Ye wete, be whom this tresoun was compassid,  
 Twen brethre tweyne to make dyuysioun,  
 The yonger slayn, & nothyng hath\* trespasid, 2684  
 Most redi were to the destruccioun  
 Off Artaxerses; for in conclusioun,  
 Whan the brethre moordred wer in deede,  
 Artabanus thouhte to succede. 2688
- But Artaxerses, be pleynt instruccioun  
 Off oon that callid was\* Baccar[i]us,  
 Be toknyng kneuh the couert fals tresoun
- As a result,  
 Darie was  
 slain in his  
 innocence.
- Artaxerses  
 was informed of  
 Artabanus'  
 treason,

2668. Xerse H. 2672. neuer wer R. 2673. Artaxarses H.

2677. auhte] ouht to H. 2680. yonger] yonge R.

2682. wite R, wote H.

2684. yonger] younger brothir R — hath nothyng B — hath]  
had R.

2688. for to H.

2690. was callid B, R — Baccaryus H 5, Baccabassus P.

2691. kneuh] know R.

- Off this forsaid double Artabanus, 2692  
 And how that he be treynes outraious  
 Hadde Xerses slayn, as ye han herd toforne,  
 And Darie appechid, wherbi that he was lorn.
- and sought to bring him to reckoning.  
 But as he was not powerful enough to do this alone, But off this vnkouth straunge tresoun wrouht, 2696  
 Whan Artaxerses hadde knowlechyng,  
 Bi gret auys weies he hath souht,  
 Artabanus to brynge to rek[e]nyng.  
 But speciali he dradde hym off o thyng: 2700  
 He feeble was to brynge this thyng aboute,  
 Off his seuene sonys he stood in so gret doute.
- he commanded all the worthies of Persia to come in haste, But for tacomplisse fulli his entent 2704  
 Ful secreli, this was his ordenaunce:  
 To all the worthi he hath his lettres sent,  
 Duellyng in Perse vnder his obeisaunce,  
 Withoute excus or lenger attendaunce, 2708  
 Armed echon, and in especial  
 To come in haste onto his court roial.
- armed to his court. No one knew his purpose. Cause off ther komyng was to hem nat knowe, 2712  
 The kynges purpos was holden so secre  
 And kept so cloos, bothe from hih & lowe,  
 That to his menyng no man was pryve,  
 Except the kyng saide he wolde see  
 What noubre off men, yiff it cam to neede,  
 In his diffence he myht[e] gadre\* and leede. 2716
- Among others, Artabanus came, armed only in mail. And among other cam Artabanus 2720  
 Onto the court, and list nat for to faile, —  
 A man that was cruel and coraious,  
 Ful off slehtis in al his gouernaile,  
 Which thilke tyme armyd was in maile;  
 For he with hym non other armour ladde,  
 Sauff on his bak an haberiou[n] he hadde.
- To him Artaxerses said, "My coat of mail is too short, I should like to exchange habergeons with you." Thanne Artaxerses, beying in his strengthe, 2724  
 To hym abraide off fals affeccioun:  
 "For that my maile wantith off his lengthe,  
 I wolde with the change myn haberiou[n]."  
 The tother hauyng noon euel suspeccioun, 2728  
 Ongirt hymself[e], wolde no lenger bide,  
 Bothe suerd & dagger cast hem ferr a-side.

2702. stood in] hadde R, J, had P.

2711. so] om. R. 2712. frome both H. 2716. gadrede B.

2717. And] om. R. 2724. beying] kyng R — his] om. H.

- And whil that he threuh off his haberioun,  
 And with the maile stoppid was his siht,  
 He beyng naked, for short conclusioun,  
 The kyng out pullith a suerd[e] keene & briht;  
 And thoruh the herte he rooff hym anon riht.  
 And afftir that, off indignacioun  
 Took his seuene sonys & cast hem in prisoun.
- Off ther eende what sholde I mor endite,  
 Nor off ther deth make a digressioun?  
 God mai his vengau[n]ce a while weel respite,  
 But moordre will out, & al such fals tresoun.  
 And for Artaban hadde a condicioun,  
 Falsli to moordre, as ye toforn ha[ue] seyn,  
 With onwar moordre he guerdonyd was ageyn.
- Thus euer moordre requereth for his wages  
 Sclaundre inportable, odious for to heere, —  
 A woord diffamous, most foul in al languages,  
 The soun horrible bi report to appeere,  
 A clips duryng, whos dirknesse may nat cleere;  
 For this woord moordre, most ougli & onfair,  
 Bi a rehersyng infectith al the hair.

And as  
 Artabanus drew  
 2732 his habergeon  
 off over his  
 head, Artaxerxes  
 stabbed him to  
 the heart with  
 his sword.

2736

Thus murder is  
 punished with  
 murder,

2740

2744

2748

and there is no  
 word more foul  
 in any language;  
 its spoken sound  
 infects all the  
 air.

[Off duk Palantus, and Spartenois werred them of  
 Missene for rauysshing their maidenen.]<sup>1</sup>

- A**FFTIR the deth[e] and [the] fatal cas  
 And pitous moordre off Artabanus,  
 Next in ordre appered to Bochas  
 A myhti duc, callid Palantus,  
 Sone off a knyht Inamed Arathus.  
 Which was exiled, thoh he no tresoun mente,  
 Out off his cite, that callid was Tarente.
- Vpon his exil he sore gan compleyne,  
 Besechyng Bochas to getyn hym a space  
 Withynne his book, to write his greuou peyne,  
 Al-be that he whilom stood in grace

2752

2756

[p. 178]

2760

Next in order  
 appeared  
 Phalanthus, son  
 of Aracus, who  
 was exiled from  
 Tarentum.

Fortune raised  
 him from a poor  
 knight to the  
 estate of duke

2732. his] be H. 2734. pullith] plukkith H.  
 2738. Off] And of H. 2739. a] om. H. 2740. weel] om. R.  
 2741. fals] om. R. 2746. Importable H — for] om. H.  
 2752. the] om. H, R, J, R 3, H 1, H 5, H 4, H 3, R 2, Sloane;  
 Add. *bas* the.  
 2755. Phalantus P. 2756. Inamed] named R — Aratus P.  
 2758. Tharente H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J leaf 73 verso.

Be glad aspectis off Fortunys face;  
For she hym reised be fauour off hir myht 2764  
To dukis estat from a ful poore knyht.

at the time when the Spartans made war on the Messenians, who had ravished their maidens during a religious festival.

But ceriously this mater to conveie,  
How he was maad[e] duk & gouernour,  
Whan Sparteys gan mortali werreie 2768  
Geyn Messeniens, as seith myn auctour,  
With gret costage and deligent labour.

And cause was this; for thei with myhti hond  
Rauesshid be force all maidenys off that lond. 2772

For this people, now named Spartenoyis,  
As the stori cleerli can deuise,  
Wer callid afor[n]e Lacedemonoyis,  
In armis preued, manli and riht wise. 2776  
And whil thei dede a solempne sacrefise  
Onto ther goddis, the people off Messenye  
Rauesshid ther maidenys, or thei it koude espie.

So the Spartans laid siege to Messenia and vowed never to depart until the town was won.

On which[e] wrong for to do vengau[n]ce, 2780  
The Spartenois kauhte indignacioun;  
And off assent, with al ther hool puissaunce,  
Thei leide a siege round aboute the tou[n].  
And off o will and oon affeccioun 2784  
Thei made a vow\* the siege whan thei begunne,  
Neuer to departe til the tou[n] wer wonne.

[[H]ow Spartenois lay ten yere atte sege and how  
their wyues displeisid with their longe absence  
sent hem a message vt infra.]<sup>1</sup>

They lay before it ten years, until their wives at home grew impatient at their absence and sent a message, telling them that they were tired of living alone,

Afor the tou[n] fulli ten yeer thei lai,  
And fro the siege, as thei hadde maad ther oth, 2788  
Thei nat departed nouter nyht nor dai,  
But stille abood and nat assonder goth.  
Theroff ther wyues beyng at hom wer wroth;  
To ther husbandis a massager thei sente, 2792  
Vnder these woordis declaryng ther entente.

2764. off] in H. 2765. ful] om. R, J.

2775. tofor[n]e H.

2785. a vow] avow B.

2787. Affor[n]e H. 2789. nor] ne H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 73 verso, inner margin.

- Saide it was nat accordyng with resoun,  
 Thei lik widwes to lyue disconsolat,  
 Withoute confort or consolacioun, 2796  
 Ferr from ther husbondis to stonde al desolat,  
 Myscheuys considred, that fall in ech estat  
 Be long absence, which ech man sholde dreede,  
 Thoruh duyers siknesse that fall in womanheede.2800
- “The tid abit nat for no maner man,  
 Nor stynt his cours for no creature;  
 And hard it is, as we reherse can,  
 Thyng to withstonde that kom[*e*]th off nature. 2804  
 Harm doon be kynde is froward to recure;  
 And ther is founde ful litil sekirnesse,  
 Wher-as nature afforceth brotilnesse.
- This litil sonde auhte inouh suffice, 2808  
 To declare damage that mai fall  
 Be long absence, folkis that be wise.  
 Sumtyme departed, ageyn men may nat call;  
 That seelde is seyn, in loue doth appall; 2812  
 And nothyng mor maketh wyues erre,  
 Than disseueraunce off folk that be in werre.”
- This was theeffect, pleyntli in substaunce,  
 Sent to ther husbondis, which at the sieg lai, 2816  
 Compleynyng thei hadde had no plesaunce  
 Space off ten yeer, as in louys plai;  
 But desolat, in sørwe and gret affrai,  
 Ther liff thei ladde, affermyng in sentence, 2820  
 Cause off ther constreynt was ther long absence.
- And whan the lettres wer at the sieg rad  
 To forn the cite in al ther mortal stryues,  
 Thei wer astonyd and gan to wexe sad, 2824  
 And verrai weri almost off ther lyues,  
 For to considere the compleynt off ther wyues.  
 Till ther capteyn a\* remedie out souht,  
 Be whos counsail euene thus thei wrouht: 2828
- First olde knyhtis that hadde the sieg sworn  
 It for tacomplisshe, and cast hem to be trewe,  
 His counsail was, as thei hadde hiht beforen,  
 To holde ther promys & theroff nothyng rewe; 2832  
 But yonge knyhtis, that wer come off newe,
2797. *al*] *om.* R. 2812. *seldom* P. 2814. *folkis* R.  
 2816. *the*] *om.* R, H. 2818. *Spaces* R.  
 2821. *1st ther*] *om.* R. 2827. *a*] and B.
- and that if their husbands didn't look out, they might find that others had taken their places;  
 for there is little security where nature afforces frailty.  
 When the message was read at the sieg, there was great consternation,  
 and Phalanthus suggested that the old knights should keep their vow and remain, but that the younger ones could return home if they wished.

Mihte as thei list[e], freli at ther will,  
Chese wher thei wolde go or bide still.

And heerupon for ther most auail, 2836

In haste ther capteyn, as maad is remembraunce,

Off hih prudence gaff hem this counsail:

That knyhtis olde, lich ther assuraunce,

Sholde off the siege haue the gouernaunce, 2840

And yonge knyhtis, most fressh & weel beseyn,

Sholde from the siege hom be sent ageyn.

This they did;  
and when they  
reached home  
they decided  
to exchange  
wives and each  
to take the first  
one that came  
to hand.

Thei made among hem a ful straunge  
ordenaunce

[p. 179]

At ther hom comyng: withoute difference 2844

To entirchaunge ther wuyes for plesaunce,

And take hir first that cam to ther presence.

This was thaccord among hem in sentence,

Most redi weie, to ther opynyoun, 2848

To engendrure and procreacioun.

So, without  
quarreling, they  
mised one  
another's wives;  
and the children  
born to them  
were called  
Parthenia,  
which means  
engendered in  
adultery.

Ther was among hem quarel nouter striff

In this mateer, nor no variaunce;

For eueri man mysused othres wiff 2852

To ther desirs as was to hem plesaunce.

And thus childre thoruh this ordenaunce

That wer engendrid, the cas is thus befall,

Parthenois men dede hem afftir call. 2856

Which in our tunge, to speke in woordes pleyne,

Afftir the Greek, who list considre and see,

Is no mor[e], platli for to seyne,

Than thilke childre which engendrid be 2860

In auoutrie: wherfor, in that cuntre,

Parthenois off custum thei wer namyd,

Born off wombes which that wer diffamyd.

The result was,  
that no one had  
a just claim to  
his inheritance,

The fals occasioun off this auoutrie 2864

Caused afftir gret myscheeff & damage,

That no man koude, as for his partie,

Be successioun, whan he cam to age,

Be tittle off riht cleyme his heritage; 2868

For wher a lyne falsli doth proceede,

Hard is to knowe be riht who shal succede.

2835. abyde R.

2836. heerupon] therupon R.

2840. 1st the] *om.* H. 2842] *om.* R.

2849. and] and mak R. 2850. nouter] nor H.

- The disturbaunce off fals successioun  
 And titles cleymed, afforced with gret myht, 2872  
 Wher that auoutrie hath domynacioun  
 And is supportid off will & nat off riht,  
 And cleym off trouthe hath lost his cleer[e] liht, —  
 Thouh ther parties myhti been and stronge, 2876  
 God wil nat suffre thei shal endure longe.
- And Spartennois peisyng all these thynges,  
 How fals assurance was in ther lynage,  
 The ientil blood troublid first off kynges; 2880  
 For no man knew, off hih nor low parage,  
 His owne fader be liknesse off visage, —  
 Nor fader non, bi his gret errour,  
 Koude yeue no title to his successour. 2884
- Wherupon folwed a gret myschaunce,  
 Hatful to heere: thoruhout the cuntre  
 Ech man troubled in his cuntenance,  
 Who sholde cleyme be any liberte 2888  
 To entre his lond or to stonde fre,  
 Such doubte thei hadde, ech man for his partie;  
 So importable was the[r] auoutrie!
- This grete myscheeff, who-so taketh heed, 2892  
 Be long processe made hem to knowe & see  
 How thei wer able, as be likliheed,  
 For ther outrages to\* fall in pouerte.  
 And off assent thei cast hem for to fle, 2896  
 Vnder a capteyn, be strong & myhti hond,  
 Fro\* that cuntre to wynne sum other lond.
- And, as I reede, thei ches duk Palantus,  
 Off whom I spak, to gouerne ther passage, 2900  
 Takyng no leue, the stori tellith thus,  
 At ther departyng, begynnyng ther viage,  
 Thei wer so confus off cheer & off visage:  
 For ther was noon off al that grete route, 2904  
 To chese his fader but that stood in doute.

as always  
happens where  
there is  
adultery.

No one knew  
who his father  
was; no father  
was sure of his  
own son;

and as no one  
was able to  
establish a  
valid claim to  
his own land,

they feared that  
they would fall  
into poverty,  
and decided  
to flee their  
country and try  
to win another.

Duke  
Phalanthus was  
chosen captain;  
and they left  
without taking  
leave,

2878. Spartennois] Partennoys R, Parthenois J, P.

2881. louh nor hih H.

2895. to] forto B.

2898. Fro] For B, R, J.

2902. At] And, R.

confused and overcome with shame, and arrived at Tarentum, a city in Naples.

Thei heeld hemsilff[e] verrai[ly] ashamed,  
 And for shame out off that lond thei wente,  
 Lik a peeple disclaundred & diffamed 2908  
 Thoruh thauoutrie, to which thei dede assente.  
 And to a cite that callid was Tharente,  
 Which stant in Poile, a myhti strong cuntre,  
 This duk Palantus cam with his meyne. 2912

There Duke Phalanthus expelled the citizens and long governed the country in prosperity,

And ther he putte, thoruh his gret[e] myht,  
 The citeseyn[e]s out off that cite,  
 And gat Tharente ful lik a manli knyht,  
 And ther abood in long prosperite 2916  
 As governour & duk off that cuntre,  
 Till that his peeple be fals collusioun  
 Hym to de pryue souht out occasioun.

until he was exiled by his subjects in his old age. Men cannot put their trust in the commons.

Thei hym exilid whan he was fall in age. 2920  
 Loo, what it is in comouns to assure!  
 Stormy off herte, onseur off ther corage,  
 That seelde or neuer ther frenship doth endure.  
 Men mai to-dai ther fauour weel recure, 2924  
 And tomorwe lat set it at a preeff:  
 Thei rathest hyndre whan men stonde at myscheeff.

[Off Ceson Quincius exiled and Graccus take  
 prisonere.]<sup>1</sup>

Ceso Quintius and Gracchus, prince of the Æqui, next began to complain with one voice to Bochas.

I CAN no mor reherse off Palantus, [p. 180]  
 Duk & ledere off Parthennois; 2928  
 But I will tell how Ceson Quincius  
 Cam tofor Bochas, with a ful pitous vois  
 His tale gan, and\* Graccus prince off Equois, —  
 Bothe attonys gan ther song entune, 2932  
 Most doolfulli to pleyne vpon Fortune.

Ceso was banished Rome, although a dictator.

This myhti prince Ceson Quincius  
 Compleyned first, as maad is menciouñ,  
 How thei off Rome wer contrarious 2936  
 And felli wrouhte to his destruccioun,  
 And ful oniustli bashed hym the toun,

2906. verraily] verrai MSS., very P.

2929. Ceso Quintius P.

2930. ful] om. H.

2931. and] how B, J, and how P, H 5, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 74 recto.



- And natwithstandyng he was a dictatour,  
Hym to confounde thei dede ther labour. 2940
- Cause off his exil compassid, as I reede,  
That he was slouh, thei saide, & negligent  
Hym to defende touchyng apel in deede,  
[Which] that ageyn hym was wrouht off fals  
entent. 2944
- Yit Cincinnatus, his fader, be assent  
Paide for amendis, as seyn cronycleris,  
Met out off lond drauht off thre arblasteris.
- Yit his enmyes wolde nat be content,  
But proceded that he was exiled, 2948  
Dede execucioun off his iugement,  
As in his story ful pleykli is compiled,  
He afftir neuer myht be reconciled, 2952  
Which I ha[ue] pite to put in remembraunce, —  
So litel offence sholde ha[ue] so gret vengau[n]ce!
- Gracchus off Rome, callid Cloellius,  
Prynce off Equoys, myn auctour seith the same, 2956  
Was in his tyme notable and glorious,  
And a gret duk, ful renommed off fame.  
But how the people of Equois first took name,  
Vnder support, that no man ha[ue] disdeyn, 2960  
I will the processe declare heer in certeyn.
- Iohn Bochas seith, ther is a nacioun  
Which that first[e] wer callid Hunois,  
And secondli also bi successioun 2964  
Off ful long tyme named Anathois;  
And aldirlast men callid hem Equois,  
Lich as I trowe myn auctour seith the same,  
Off hors most swift thei took[e] first the name. 2968
- And as it is remembred in sentence,  
Bi ther manheed and famous hardynesse,  
Geyn Alisandre thei made a strong diffence  
On hors[e]bak thoruh ther gret swiftnesse. 2972

The Romans  
said he  
neglected to  
defend himself  
in a suit,  
although his  
father Cincin-  
natus made  
2944 amends for him.

2948 But his enemies  
were unfor-  
giving and he  
was never after  
recalled.

2956 Clælius  
Gracchus was  
prince of the  
Æqui,

2964 who were first  
called Hunois  
and afterwards  
Anathois,

2972 and fought  
bravely against  
Alexander in  
the Caucasus,

2943. apel] the apple P, thappell R 3.

2944. that] om. J, P. 2949. proceede R.

2950. execucioun] extorcioun J.

2951. As] & H — his] om. R.

2959. Aequoys P — first took] took first ther R, J, P — name]  
be name H, per name R 3, ther name H 5.

2960. haue] will H. 2961. heer] om H.

2970. manhode R, manhod H.

Beside the hill[e], pleynli to expresse,  
Which in cronycles is callid Caucasus,  
This peepke off Equois were victorious.

and were great  
horsemen,  
conquering  
Ethiopia and  
India and all  
Egypt.

To ther noblesse, pleynli as I fynde, 2976  
Nothyng in erthe was mor expedient  
In ther conquest off Ethiope and Inde,  
As hors most swiff, seruyng ther entent,  
Therbi conqueryng al the orient. 2980  
So gret prowesse was in ther passage,  
That Equois brouhte al Egipt in seruage.

Wherever they  
rode they got  
plunder; but  
when Gracchus  
incited them  
against the  
Romans, he  
was beaten by  
Cincinnatus,  
a poor but  
worthy knight.

Thus wher-euer Equois dede ride,  
Thei gat gret good to ther possessioun. 2984  
And Gracchus was ther gouernour & guide,  
Which bi his steryng and fals suggestioun  
Ageyn the Romeyns fill in rebellioun;  
But to withstonde hym thei sent out anon riht . 2988  
Cyncynatus, preued a ful good knyht.

He was weel trusted and knowe in the toun,  
And for his prudence chose a dictatour.  
His liflode smal and his possessioun, 2992  
Al-be he was a worthi werreior,  
Which hath venquysshid be his knyhtli labour  
The said[e] Gracchus, for al his gret poweer,  
And hom to Rome brouht hym prisoneer. 2996

Cincinnatus  
was granted  
a triumph,  
and Gracchus  
died in prison.

Cyncynatus in [his] char was set,  
Callid Quincius, for this gret victorie,  
And most solempneli with senatours met,  
Which gaff to hym, for tencrece his glorie, 3000  
Laude off tryumphe, to putte hym in memorie.  
And Gracchus afftir, for his rebellioun,  
With cheynys bounde, cast in a derk prisoun.

which is an  
evidence to us  
that Fortune is  
always false and  
deceitful.

And ther he deide in ful gret myscheeff, 3004  
Afftir his conquestis first famous & notable.  
An evidence to vs and a gret preeff,  
How that Fortune is ai fals & onstable,  
Euer double, froward and deceyuable, 3008  
The fall off Gracchus declare can ful weel,  
That whilom sat so hih vpon hir wheel.

2974. callid is H.

2980. Therbi] gretly H.

2983. ride] abyde R. 2988. out] om. H. 2993. was he R.

[Here Bochas rehercith the tyranny of Apius and falsnesse of Iuges.]<sup>1</sup>

**N**ATWITHSTANDYNG Bochas afrom hath  
told

[p. 181]

Off Appius the falsnesse importable,  
And his outrages & surfetis manyfold,  
To be remembred hatful and repreuable,  
Yit as hym thouhte, it was heer couenable,  
To mor rebuk and spottying off his name,  
Newe to reherse his sclauandre & his diffame.

3012 Notwithstanding that Bochas had already told about the dishonesty of Appius, he thought it would be well to rehearse it once again, the more to rebuke his name.

The grete offencis off this Appius  
And oppressiouns that he vpon hym took,  
Made hym to growe so inli coueitous,  
Thoruh his rauyne that al the peepel quook,  
As ye mai seen in the seconde book,  
Wher myn auctour doth cleerli specefie  
His fraude in doomys, & his fals lecherie.

3020 A lustful, infamous tyrant,

Eek off this tirant remembred ye mai reede  
Cheeff iuge he was, with other officeris,  
Callid decemvir; & thoruh his pride in deede,  
Ageyn the custum of them that wern his feeris,  
He made be born standardis & baneris  
In other wise, off hih presumpcioun,  
Than vsid was afrom in Rome toun.

3024 chief judge and decemvir, he went about Rome with standards and banners borne before him in a manner quite different from that of earlier days; and whereas formerly there had been  
3028 twelve  
3032 sergeants, this Appius ordained that there should be 120 men of arms, to overawe the people.

These iuges hadde a custum & maneer,  
Lik ther estatis in ther gouernaunce,  
Ech afftir other to ha[ue] born a baner  
Wher thei wente, such was thordynaunce,  
Be twelue sergauntis noumbred in substaunce.  
But Appius off pride and gret outrage  
I-chaungid hath that custum and vsage.

3036

He ferst ordeyned ech sholde in his place  
Off decemvir haue a baner born,  
In ther walkyng, the peepel to manace,  
An hundred men off armys them toforn,  
And twenti ouer, bi a statut sworn.

3040

3011. to-forn R, toforn H.  
3020. to] om. R — so] for R. 3024. fals] om. R.  
3025. off] om. R. 3031. vsid was] vsis were R.  
3034. to haue born] ta borne H, to ha born J, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 74 verso.

- Wherbi the cite bar gret cost in deede, 3044  
 And al the peepel wer put in feer & dreede.
- They thought it remarkable for judges to go about in this fashion; but all that Appius wanted was power to do as he pleased and to oppress the people at his will.
- To seen the sergantis walke in plate & maile,  
 Thei thouhte it was a merueilous werkyng,  
 Iuges to gon with such[e] apparaile 3048  
 In ther procedyng, as ech had been a kyng.  
 And hool thentent off Appius menyng,  
 Was that he sholde, off power & off myht,  
 Doon what hym list, wher it wer wrong or ryht, 3052
- The rihtful pun[y]she and the gilty spare,  
 Fauoure wrong for bribes & for meede.  
 The peepel oppressid stood in sorwe & care,  
 Fond no socour to help hem in ther neede; 3056  
 Lawe was ther non, for resoun lai be dreede,  
 Will was iuge and plesau[n]ce equite,  
 And thus be maistri was gouerned the cite.
- After the death of Virginia
- And as it is remembred be Bochas, 3060  
 Appius was lecherous off nature,  
 And cauh[t] a quarel, as ye han herd the caas,  
 Ageyn Virgynea, a maide cleene & pure.  
 And for he sholde in hir nothyng recure 3064  
 Touchyng his lust, hir fader in that striff  
 With a sharp suerd made hir lose hir liff.
- he was put in chains and died in prison,
- And for this tiraunt be fals ribaudie  
 Caused hir deth be hasti violence, 3068  
 And for he sholde hir beute nat maistrie,  
 Deieng a maide in hir chast innocence,  
 Therfor he was demed in sentence,  
 As is toforn maad cleer[e] menciou[n], 3072  
 For to be cheyned and deien in prisoun.
- and the decemvirs were abolished and succeeded by tribunes.
- Eek decemvir losten ther power,  
 And neuer in Rome afftir bar no name,  
 Nor off that sect was maad non officer; 3076  
 And among all Appius bar the blame,  
 Whos crym reboundeth to his eternal shame,  
 As ye han herd[e], who that can discerne, —  
 And thanne tribunys wer chose for to gouerne. 3080

3047. werkyng] walkyng R.

3050. menyng] meevyng R.

3064. no thyng in hir H.

3071. demed] demyng H.

3074. decemvir] decemviri P.

And in Bochas lik as it is founde,  
 The said[e] iuges in myscheff dede fyne;  
 Whil Appius lay in prisoun bounde,  
 Exiled wer[e]n all the tother nyne.  
 The good, the tresour off them & off ther lyne  
 Achetid was, for short conclusioun,  
 To comoun profit & ences off the toun.

3084 While Appius  
 lay in prison,  
 the other judges  
 were exiled and  
 their goods and  
 treasure  
 escheated for  
 the common  
 profit.

### ¶ Lenvoye.

**T**HIS litil tragedie doth shortli heer deuise, 3088  
 What myschef folweth for the grete onriht  
 Vsid be iuges in many sundri wise:  
 For whan that fauour bleendid hath ther siht,  
 And innocence is bor doun with myht, 3092  
 And in his quarel pouert may nat proceede,  
 Because that trouthe oppressid is with meede.

3088 This litte  
 tragedy shews  
 what mischief  
 can be done by  
 venal judges, to  
 whom might is  
 right.

A iuge sholde off equite despise [p. 182] 3096  
 To take giffes off any maner wiht,  
 And redi been all wrongis to chastise,  
 From all giffes turne awei his siht,  
 His handis close, his eris stoppe ariht, 3100  
 And been ai war, for frenshipe, hate or dreede,  
 That trouthe be nat oppressid with no meede.

[p. 182] A judge ought  
 to despise gifts,  
 chastise all  
 wrongs and not  
 allow truth to  
 be overcome by  
 rewards.

The noble doctryn and vertuous emprise  
 Off philisophres, that hadde so gret insiht, 3104  
 Was this to iuges, that prudent wer & wise:  
 For freend or fo ther doomys so be diht,  
 Off rihtwisnesse that the sunne briht  
 Eclipsed neuer, list men for ther falsheede  
 Reporte that riht was put a-bak for meede. 3108

Such was the  
 noble doctrine  
 of philosophers,  
 who said that  
 judges should  
 never allow the  
 sun of righteous-  
 ness to be  
 eclipsed.

Noble Pryncis, supportours off iustise,  
 Callid lodesterris to yeue the peeple liht,  
 On Appius lat iuges nat\* practise,  
 That trouthes laumpe be cleer bothe dai & nyht. 3112  
 Your office peised, that longeth to a knyht,  
 Hold up the balauunce off doom in your manheede,  
 That lawe in iuges be nat corupt with meede!

Noble princes,  
 do not let judges  
 follow the  
 example of  
 Appius and  
 corrupt the  
 law through  
 bribery.

3085. lynes H. 3088. heer] om. J. 3091. that] the R.  
 3094. trouthe] trouhe R.  
 3106. that] of R. 3108. a-bak] away H.  
 3111. lat nat Iuges B.

## ¶ Bochas ageyn thontrowith of Iugis.

After rebuking Appius, Bochas wrote somewhat angrily, that judges should be of mature age and virtuous in their lives.

**S**VYNG vpon the deth off Appius 3116

And his rebukes for his gret outrage,  
Bochas be writyng wex sumwhat irous  
Geyn iuges false, & thouht in his corage  
Thei shulde be sad & demeur off age, 3120  
And that ther liff be vertu sholde drawe,  
To keepe the preceptis & statutis off the lawe.

They ought to have knowledge of philosophy and devote their time to civil and canon law.

Thei ouhte off resoun themseluen to habile,  
To haue science off philosophie, 3124

And knowe ther textis off canoun & cyuyle,  
And therupon her wittis hool applie;  
For cunnynng iuges be prudent policie  
Cause ordenaunces, in lawe comprehendid, 3128  
Thoruh rihtful doom gretli to be comendid.

Justice is a very important thing to all realms,

Iustise off lawe doth rewmys enlumyne,  
Susteneth trouthe, supporteth innocence,  
Off raueynour[es] boweth doun the chyne, 3132

Punsheth robbours for ther gret offence,  
Sluggi truantis for ther necligence,  
And feyned beggeris, that gretli disauaile,  
Constreyneth them to labour & trauaile. 3136

and in old time the founders of law took care that princes went no further in their triumphs than the law of God and Nature permitted.

Foundours off lawe bi antiquite,  
Caused in londis was suffred non errour,  
And made off pryncis the roial maieste  
To shyne in worshepe, be deligent labour, 3140  
Wrestid corages off many conquerour,  
That ther tryumphes no ferther sholde atteyne  
Than lawe off God & nature dede ordeyne.

Will was then subject to righteousness and sensuality to reason.

Will was that tyme vnder subieccioun 3144  
Off rihtwisnesse, be trouthe ful weel conveied,  
Sensualite was seruant to resoun,

And froward lust was vnder lok weel keied;  
Sentence off statutis was nat disobeied, 3148  
The riche dede riht thoruhout eueri bond,  
Poore folk lyued be labour off ther hond.

3123. themseluen] ther silff H.

3124. be science H.

3128. Cause] Cause of R.

3130. illumyne R.

3134. Slouggi R.

- Lordshipe that tyme auoided meyntenaunce,  
 Hoolichirch lyued in parfitnesse;  
 3152 Knythod tho daies for trouthe whet his lance,  
 And fals extorsioun hadde non interesse;  
 Marchantis wynnynge cam al off rihtwisnesse,  
 Artificers the werkday wer nat idill,  
 3156 And bisynesse off labour heeld the bridill.
- Women that age farsid wer nor hornyd,  
 Nor ther tailes wer nat serpentyne;  
 Wis men off foli, nor clerkis wer nat scornyd,  
 3160 Which in science most fresshli dede shyne.  
 Lawe disherited non heires from ther lyne,  
 Lesyngmongers fond that tyme no socours,  
 3164 And flaterers thanne wer maad no confessours.
- This goldene world[e], flouryng in vertu,  
 Born vp be loue groundid on stabilnesse,  
 Off auoutri ther sprang out non issu,  
 Pryncis be doctryne establisshed ther noblesse,  
 3168 Preesthod in praier, knythod in worthynesse,  
 Ech thyng be lawe stood vnder gouernauce,  
 Marchantis be mesour & iust peis off balauce.
- First Phoroneus be dilligent labour [p. 183]  
 3172 Fond out lawes, that kyng was off Argyues;  
 The Grekis studie he gilte with gret honour.  
 This poletik prynce, tauoide hem fro stryues,  
 His statutis kept[e] duryng al ther lyues,  
 3176 Fond first the maner, Bochas doth deuyse,  
 How to Iubiter was maad sacrefise.
- Eek myhti Mynos, whilom kyng off Crete,  
 Ordeyned lawes ageyn transgressiouns,  
 3180 To fere bi rigour foolis that were onmeete,  
 And stauche off surfetis all occasiouns,  
 Make for robbours myhti strong prisouns;  
 And Dedalus, his cheeff artificer,  
 3184 Made Laberintus be deligence entier.
- And eek Mercurie, born be the flood of Nyle,  
 As writ Lactance, was off Egipt kyng,  
 Onto marchantis dede lawes first compile  
 3188 Off weihte and mesour, to vs[e] in chaffaryng.

The lords  
 avoided main-  
 tenance, and the  
 clergy led lives  
 of perfection;  
 merchants did  
 not cheat;  
 knights sup-  
 ported truth,

nor did women  
 paint their faces  
 or wear horned  
 headdresses and  
 long trains.  
 Wise men and  
 scholars were  
 not looked down  
 upon and  
 flatterers were  
 never made  
 confessors.

It was a golden  
 world borne up  
 by love and  
 just law.

Phoroneus,  
 king of Argos,  
 invented laws  
 and sacrifices  
 to Jupiter.

Minos, king of  
 Crete,  
 ordained laws  
 against fools  
 and robbers,

and Mercury,  
 king of Egypt,  
 legislated for  
 merchants and  
 standardized  
 their weights  
 and measures.

3153. for trouthe whet] quet H. 3168. be] with R.

3172. First by H. 3175. tauoide] auoyde R.

3182. al pe H. 3183. Make] Made H.

3187. As] And R — Lactance] Bochas H.

- And for his wisdam & excellent kunnyng,  
Off olde poetis, that whilom wer so wise,  
He callid was god off marchaundise. 3192
- Solon also the beste lawes made,  
As writ Valeri, hymselff to magnefie:  
Athenye[n]ses theroff wer ful glade,  
His gret[e] wisdam whan thei dede espie; 3196  
Thei fond theryn so moch[e] policie.  
And he was redi euer to debate  
Ageyn tirantis, so sore he dede hem hate.
- Lycurgus made his people  
swear to keep the law while  
he was away on a pilgrimage,  
Kyng Ligurgus eek whilom dede his cure 3200  
To make lawes to comoun auantage,  
And that thei sholde perpetueli endure,  
He made his people be sworn, off eueri age,  
Whil that he wente out on pilgrymage, 3204  
Fro poynt to poynt to keepe hem in certeyn,  
Onto tyme that he cam hom ageyn.
- and since his laws were so  
useful and important, he  
preferred not to return home  
again, so that his statutes  
might never be broken.  
And for his lawes wer off gret substaunce  
And profitable to eueri comounte, 3208  
He ches to lyue in exil and penaunce,  
Neuer to resorte ageyn to his contre,\*  
That his statutis be eternyte  
Sholde nat be broke, as ye han herd toforn, 3212  
Bi the convencioun to which that thei wer sworn.
- Before he died he commanded  
that his bones should be cast  
far out into the sea,  
To comoun profit had he such tendirnesse,  
That he forsook his kyngdam & kenreede  
[To] lyue in exill, his story berth witnessse. 3216  
But or he deied, as he lay bedreede,  
He bad his bonys sholde be cast in deede  
Amyd the se, ferr out fro the stronde,  
That his statutis myhte in ther strengthe stonde. 3220
- that there might be no occasion  
for his subjects to be false to  
their vow.  
He eschewed euerich occasioun,  
As [a] thyng hatful which was nat fair,  
That his forsaid[e] roial myhti toune  
Sholde breke ther oth because off his repair. 3224  
But touchyng that, he put hem in despair,  
Cast hym neuer resorten in ther dawes,  
List thei wolde breke the sentence off his lawes.

3194. Valeri writ R. 3195. Athemeses R.

3198. euer he was redy for to R.

3200. Kyng] om. H — Licurgus P.

3210. his] this H — contre] cite B, J, R, cite H 5, cite P.

3219. from R, J, R 3, P, frome H.



¶ An exclamacioun of Bochas ageyn thextorsions  
& oppressions of þe poraill of Rome.<sup>1</sup>

**I**OHAN BOCHAS heer makith a digressioun, 3228 John Bochas digresses here, rebuking the dishonest officials and judges of Italy and Rome, who oppressed the poor

And bi rebukyng cast hym for tassaile  
Thilke officeres that wer in Rome toun,  
Which bextorsioun oppressid the poraile, —  
And ageyn iuges also off Itaile, 3232 poor

A[nd] namli them, that for lucre & meede  
Sett trouthe aside & took off it noon heede.

He maketh ageyn hem an exclamacioun,  
Such as to vertu wer contrarious, 3236 and took advantage of their position to be licentious, like Appius, false in their decisions and foul in their lives.

And vnder colour and occasioun  
Off ther office list to be lecherous,  
Lik condiciowned onto Appius, 3240

And fynali, as it was afftir seene,  
Fals in ther domys & off ther liff oncleene.

O, quod Bochas, O trouthe, O thou Iustise,  
Which in your noblesse whilom dede excell,  
Wher in effect is now your exercise? 3244 "Where are Truth and Justice now," he exclaimed, "Where do they dwell? Few men can tell of their practise.

Wher is your wonyng? alas, wher do ye duell?  
Off your practik ful fewe men can tell,  
So ferr put bak is now your disciplyne,  
Your kyn exiled and your noble lyne! 3248

Aduocatis that now doon occupie [p. 184] "Advocates apply their wits only to falsehood, and judgments are wholly dependent on will. 3252

Your olde sees & placis ful roiall,  
Al to falsheed ther wittis thei applie, —  
Such couetise now regneth ouer all!  
Causes off cyuyle & causes cremynall  
Ther doomys take, wher thei be fals or trewe,  
Al afftir will be statutis chaungid newe.

Ther been eek other callid accessours, 3256 "Assessors, who give counsel to judges, might better be called ravers; their labour is all for their own profit.

Sittyng be iuges to yeuen hem counsail,  
Which may ful weel be callid raueynours;  
For thei nat laboure but for ther owne auail.  
A noubre off robbours folwe at ther tail, 3260

To pile the people, as ye han herd tofor, n,  
Bare as a sheep that is but newe shorn.

3233. &amp;] or H, R.

3249. doon] doth R. 3253. &amp;] or R. 3259. for] om. R.

3260. ther] the R.

<sup>1</sup> "Here Bochas makith an exclamacioun of the extorcionioun of the officers of Rome," MS. J, leaf 75 verso.

"No more is to be said than that Truth stands desolate, and righteousness dare not complain.

There is no mor in this mateer to seyne,  
 Sauff onli this: trouthe stant desolat, 3264  
 [And] rihtwisnesse to no wiht dar compleyne,  
 With wrong oppressid, wepyng disconsolat.\*  
 Wherfor, ye Pryncis, that sit in hih estat,  
 Such thyng tamende but ye bet heed list take, 3268  
 God shal with you a ful hard reknyng make.

"Princes, if you do not reform these things, God will make a hard reckoning with you.

Your office is in your magnyficence  
 Twen man and man all wronges to redresse,  
 And wher a mateer is ageyn conscience, 3272  
 It to refourme onli off rihtwisnesse;  
 To stonde be trouthe, meyntene no falsnesse,  
 And lete wis counseil such materes examyne  
 Or ye off haste theron\* determyne. 3276

"He will reward you as you deserve!"

Hath such thynges in *your* mynde among;  
 Thynk God will quite lik as ye disserue.  
 Ye spotte your noblesse iff that ye do wrong,  
 His suerd off punshyng dredith or it kerue. 3280  
 Lat your resoun & conscience conserue  
 Your noble estatis, & thynk, lik *your* werkyng,  
 The Lord off you will axen a reknyng.

[Off Alcibiades exiled and aftir brent in his bedde.]<sup>1</sup>

After this, Alcibiades, fairest of men, appeared to Bochas. He was strong, wise and discreet, born of high lineage, popular, brave, and a great orator.

AFFTIR other þat put hemsilf in pres, 3284  
 Tofor Bochas ther compleyntis to discure,  
 Cam off Athenys Alcibiades,  
 That tyme a-lyue the fairest creature.  
 And as it is remembered be scripture, 3288  
 He was discreet and wis at all assaies,  
 And oon the strengest & manli in his daies.  
 He was first born off riht hih lynage,  
 Aboue all other off most semlynesse, 3292  
 Weel proporciowned and hardi off corage,  
 Loued & weel faouored for his gret fairnesse,  
 Famous in knyththod for his worthynesse,  
 Sotil wittid, and koude bi eloquence 3296  
 Moche comprehende vnder short sentence.

3265. to no wiht dar] dare nouth R.

3266. disconsolat] desolate R, & disconsolat B.

3275. such mateers wise cownsaile H, R 3.

3276. theron] the trouthe B.

3290. And] om. R. 3292. semblynesse R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 77 recto.

- His witt enclyned to manyfold sciences,  
 Hadde off kunnyng a passyng retentiff,  
 Loued clerkis, & fond hem ther despencis,  
 Such as in practik he sauh most inuentiff.  
 To reede in bokis reioished al his liff,  
 Kepte what he radde in his memoriall,  
 And off wis counseil was noon to hym egall.
- 3300 His retentive mind turned to many branches of learning; a patron of scholars and great reader, no one could equal him in wise counsel.
- 3304
- An\* vncler he hadde Icallid Pericles,\*  
 Which stood in daunger, off excessiff spendyng;  
 Yit in his youthe this Alcibiades,  
 Seyng his vncler pensiff in lokyng,  
 Caste off wisdam to remedie that thyng;  
 And for tasswage his hertis heuynesse,  
 Gaff hym this counseil bi gret avisynesse:
- 3308 His uncle Pericles once stood in danger of indictment for exceeding the amount allowed him in repairing the temple of Minerva; but Alcibiades, seeing him downcast, said,
- 3312
- First to rehearse how the mateer stood,  
 And off his vnclers woful hih distresse.  
 Ther was to hym delyuered a summe off good,  
 To repara the temple off a goddessse  
 Callid Mynerua; but for the gret excesse  
 Off his dispendyng\*, he stood sumwhat in dreede  
 Touchyng thacounte, which he mut yilde in deede.
- 3316
- Alcibiades heerupon musyng,  
 To his vncler gaff counseil in sentence.  
 "Vncler," quod he, "lat be al your thynkyng,  
 And for yoursilff[e] shapeth this diffence,  
 Nat for tacounte — be mene off your prudence,  
 Aforn prouyed, with face & cheer onfeyned,  
 To such duressse that ye be nat constreyned."
- 3320 "Do not render any account unless you are compelled."
- 3324
- And whan Pericles\* his counseil aduertisith,  
 Fond to his worshep it was resonable;  
 And bi good leiser hymself ful weel auysith,  
 And bi prouysiou, prudent and notable,  
 Saued his estat from ech thyng repreuable,  
 So that he stood[e], touchyng this mateer,  
 As for acomptis out off al daunger.
- 3328 And Pericles, following this advice, took care so to arrange his affairs that he finally escaped all danger of reproof.
- 3332

3305. An] And B — called R — Perioles B, R, H.

3312. the] this R.

3317. dispendyng] dispense B, dispensis R, dispencis J, dispenses P.

3321. al] om. R.

3326. whan] om. H — Perioles B, H, R.

3332. accountis H.

Alcibiades ruled the Athenians both in war and peace, and was admiral of their navy.

Alcibiades, off Athene cheeff capteyn, [p. 185]  
 Fro day to day wex up to gret encres,  
 Such another was ther nowher seyn,  
 Them to gouerne bothe in werre and pes. 3336  
 And al the cite bi assent hym ches,  
 Off ther nauye in especial,  
 Vpon the se to been ther amyral.

As governor of the Catanæans he made war on Syracuse,

For his knythod thei sent hym out a-ferre, 3340  
 Off Cathenois to be ther gouernour,  
 Geyn Siracusanes for to gynne a werre.  
 First ther receyued with glorie\* & gret honour,  
 But in the eende off his gret labour, 3344  
 Fortune that is ay variant & onstable,  
 Was to this duc nat founde fauourable.

but was recalled on a charge of treason and diuoted of all his offices.

He was accusid to them off the toun,  
 Which in Athenys hadde gouernaunce, 3348  
 That he was gilty in parti off tresoun.  
 Bi them reuoked, for al his gret puissaunce  
 Off capteynship, and bi ther ordynaunce  
 And Fortunys fals mutabilite, 3352  
 Onwarli pryued from al dignyte.

He then went into voluntary exile to save his life; for the Athenians desired to offer up his head to their gods.

But for hymself[e] thus he gan prouide,  
 Wente into exil nat ferr fro that cuntre  
 Into a\* cite that callid was Elide, 3356  
 Ther for to ha[ue] fredam and liberte,  
 And off his liff to stonde in surete;  
 For in Athen thei wolde haue hym ded,  
 Onto ther goddis to offren vp his hed. 3360

Soon afterwards he went to Sparta, and there heard that through the misadventure of three captains

But whan he was off ther entent certeyn,  
 To Lacedemoyne he took the riht[e] way,  
 And be relacioun ther he herde seyn, 3364  
 How Thathenyens wer put at affray  
 In a bataile vpon a certyen day,  
 Which that thei heeld, to ther aduersite,  
 Geyn Cathenois, as thei fauht on the se.

the Athenians had been defeated at sea by the Catanæans.

But the cause off this disconfiture, 3368  
 As was told to Alcibiades,  
 Was bi thre capteyns, thuruh ther mysauenture,  
 Which in ther ledyng wer founde rech[e]les.

3333. Albiciades of Athenes H.

3334. to gret is repeated in R. 3343. gloire B.

3355. nat] and R. 3356. Into a] In ta B.

- The cheeff off them named Demostenes,  
The tother callid, the stori tellith\* vs,  
The ton Niceas, the tother Eurilocus. 3372
- Alcibiades, hauyng heeroff tidyng,  
Tauenge his wrong put hymselff in pres;  
Off Lacedemoyne he goth first to the kyng,  
Which off trouthe was callid Agides,  
Besechyng hym to graunte to his encres  
Certeyn soudiours out off his cuntre,  
For to werreie Athenes\* the cite. 3376
- So, in order to  
avenge his  
wrong, Alci-  
biades besought  
Agis, king of  
Sparta, to lend  
him an army  
to make war  
on Athens.
- Thus he wex strong, off noble prouidence,  
Hadde gret peepel vnder his gouernaunce,  
And lik a duk, maad strong in his diffence  
Be peepel gadred to his obeisaunce,  
That other pryncis, which wer off hih puissaunce,  
Gan haue envie, off wilful frowardnesse,  
And to maligne ageyn his hih noblesse. 3380
- Thus he grew  
strong, and was  
envied because  
of his bravery  
and high re-  
nown, as always  
happens; for no  
man is free  
from the slander  
of venomous  
tongues.
- For seelde or neuer in any regioun,  
Prowesse off armys, noblesse off cheualrie,  
Encres in richesse, report off hih renoun,  
Fame off kunnyng in crafft or in clergie  
May nowher duelle withoute sum envie,  
From whos malice, as folk expert mai see,  
Sauf onli wrechis no man hath liberte. 3384
- For which this prynce, as put is in memorie,  
Escapid nat, for al his hih parage,  
But that summe envied at his glorie;  
For in this liff no man hath auantage  
Ageyn tunges nor odious fals language.  
To stoppe such venym, this the beste obstacle,  
That men with suffraunce tempre ther triacle. 3388
- His clear  
prowess shad-  
owed the  
nobility of all  
other princes;  
no one equalled  
him in knight-  
hood.
- The cleer prowesse off Alcibiades  
Steyned the noblesse off other pryncis all;  
His eure hym reised up to so gret encres,  
To the hiest throne off Fortunys hall.  
Such fatal grace is onto hym fall, 3392

3372. Domestenes R.

3373. tellith] techith B.

3374. Eurilocus] Lamachus P.

3377. he] om. H.

3381. Athenes] Athenos B, Athenois R.

3385. Be] The R.

3389. This stanza is marked with a scrawl of approval in margin, J.

- That in tho daies, pleynli this no fable, 3408  
 Ther was in knythod noon to hym resemblable.
- Yet the Spartans sought to eclipse his worthinesse by false report  
 In his exil so cleer his renoun shon,  
 And thoruh Grece gaff as gret brihtnesse  
 As doth a rubi aboue ech other ston: 3412  
 Yit for teclipse & shadwe his worthynesse,  
 Lacedemonois dede ther besynesse,  
 Such as myhte nat\* to his noblesse atteyne,  
 Bi fals report his renoun to restreyne. 3416
- and laid traps to take him unawares and bring him to ruin; but he always managed to escape,  
 Await was leid to take\* hym at myscheff, [p. 186]  
 And many treynys wer serchid out & souht,  
 Off entent taput hym at repreeff.  
 But al that euer ageyn hym thei ha[ue] wrouht, 3420  
 At the eende ther purpos cam to nouht;  
 For God prouydeth off his magnyficence  
 Ageyn such malice to sauen innocence.
- although his life was constantly in danger.  
 He was likli tafalle in gret daunger, 3424  
 Lacedemonois gan at hym so disdeyne  
 Because his honour & noblesse shon so cleer,  
 That to his fon it was a dedli peyne.  
 And thus his liff stood in noun certeyne; 3428  
 For al-be-it he manli was and wis,  
 He knew nothyng ther purpos nor malice.
- To his misfortune he had a love affair with the queen, who warned him of his enemies and advised him to flee to Athens. There he took no revenge,  
 He hadde almost iwarned be\* to late,  
 And lik tastonde in gret perplexite. 3432  
 And mor his grace & fortune to abate,  
 Bi thoccaseioun off his gret beute,  
 He with the queen was wexen ful pryue;  
 For in hir grace so weel stood ther non, 3436  
 Which gaff hym warnyng off them that wer his fon.
- And bi the counsail onli off the queen,  
 Fro Lacedemoyne he wisli took his fliht  
 Toward Athenys, & thouhte he wolde seen 3440  
 His owne cuntre, ful lik a manli knyht.  
 And thouh thei hadde nat gouerned hem a-riht

3408. this is R. 3409. in knythod was noon H

3415. nat myhte B, R, J.

3417. to take] tatak B. 3418. wer] om. R.

3420. ageyn] geyn R. 3421. ther] the R.

3424. tafalle] to fall R, H, J, R 3, P.

3425. is misplaced at end of stanza; correction indicated, H.

3428. no certeyn R 3, no certaine P. 3430. nor] &amp; H.

3431. be] bien B, ben H 5. 3437. them] other R.

3440. thouhte] thouth R. 3442. thouth] thouht R.

- Towardis hym, beyng in distresse,  
 Tauenge his wrong he dede hem no duresse. 3444  
 For he thouhte it was ageyn nature,  
 To be vengable or shewe his cruelte  
 Bi thoccasioun off any auenture,  
 Or gynne a werre vpon his cuntre; 3448  
 His natiff blood meued hym to pite,  
 And off verrai natural ientillesse  
 Was debonaire geyn ther onkynd[e]nesse.
- The cas was this, for short conclusioun,  
 How kyng Darie with gret appaile 3452  
 Thouhte to werreie, off indignacioun,  
 Them off Athenys and ther toum tassaile.  
 And in his purpos proudli to preuaile, 3456  
 Thesiffernes, a prynce off gret puissaunce,  
 Off Daries\* power hadde al the gouernaunce.
- Fynal cause and ground off al this werre,  
 That Darfus gan on hem so hastili, 3460  
 And that he sente his puissaunce fro so ferre  
 For to destroie Athenys vtirli,  
 Was to hold up and sustene the parti  
 Off Lacedemoyn, which off old hatreede 3464  
 Wer euer envious them for toppresse in deede.
- But be mene off Alcibiades,  
 And bi his trete foundid on prudence,  
 Thesiffernes enclnyd to the pes, 3468  
 Therbi in parti tappese his violence.  
 And al was doon off noble prouidence,  
 And fro the place to which he was exilid,  
 He to Athenys sholde be reconciled. 3472
- Onto the cite he dede signefie  
 How Darius hadde maad his ordenaunce,  
 And bi his lettris he gan them specific,  
 Yiff thei wolde stonde at his gouernaunce, 3476  
 To condescende, pleyntli in substaunce,  
 He wolde laboure, and no lenger tarie,  
 To make accord atwen hem & kyng Darie.

for he did not  
believe it right  
to make war on  
his own country.

At that time  
Darius was  
preparing to  
attack the  
Athenians

in aid of  
Sparta;

but with the  
help of Alci-  
biades, peace  
was promised  
by the Persian  
general Tissa-  
phernes, on  
condition that  
the Athenians  
would do as  
Alcibiades told  
them.

3443. beyng] stoondyng R. 3444. duresse] distresse R.  
 3451. geyn] ageyn R, H, H 5, again P.  
 3455. tassaile] assaile H. 3456. his] om. R.  
 3458. Daries] Darius B, Daryus H 5. 3461. frome H.  
 3467. his] this R. 3469. tappese in party R.  
 3473. the] this R. 3479. atwen] tween R.

- In the city the senators were to have full control, This was the mene that he mente: 3480  
 Withynne Athenys that the senatours  
 Sholde off the cite, afftir ther entente,  
 Ha[ue] fulli lordshipe, and be ther gouernours.  
 But as cleer wethir troublid is with shours, 3484  
 Riht so vnwarli, withynne that roial toun,  
 Thoruh this trete fill a discencioun.
- but the commons, disdainng such thralldom, recalled Alcibiades to restore order. The comowneris gan sodenli disdeyne  
 To be so thrallid vnder subieccioun; 3488  
 And so bassent the comouns dede ordeyne,  
 Onli tappese al fals discencioun,  
 For to reuoke ageyn into ther toun  
 Alcibiades, as thei thouhte it meete, 3492  
 Thoruh his prudence to sette hem in quyete.
- He was made duke again and supported the commons. The senate fled. First in his komyng, myn auctour doth reporte,  
 He was maad duk ageyn off that cite,  
 And gan the parti off comouns to supporte, 3496  
 And them restore to ther old liberte.  
 Wherthurh the senat, dredyng the comounte,  
 Fledde into exil ful ferr out off al pres,  
 Onli for dreed off Alcibiades. 3500
- and the people were brought to the point of yielding the town to the Spartans. Thei stood that tyme in so gret disioynt, [p. 187]  
 Ther toun deuided and out of gouernaunce,  
 That thei wer brouht euene onto the poynt  
 To yolde the cite vnto thobeissance 3504  
 Of Lacedemoyne, thoruh ther vnhappi chaunce,  
 Withynne hemsilff[e] whan thei gan debate,  
 Vnto ther duk the senat bar such hate.
- But Alcibiades, chosen by the commons as their defender, attacked the Spartans on the sea. But the comouns ches in ther diffence 3508  
 Alcibiades to gouerne that viage.  
 And to the se, with cost & gret dispence,  
 Withoute abood he holdeth his passage  
 In myhti shippis maad for auauntage, 3512  
 Weel enarmyd, & caste, yif he myhte,  
 With Lacedemonios proudli for to fihte.

3486. this] his R — a] at R.

3490. a] as R.

3496. the] that R.

3499. into] in H — ful] om. H.

3503. onto] to R.

3504. To] Ta H — the] ther H.

3507. Vnto] Vndir R.

3510. dispence] expence R.

3513. enarmyd] armed R — &amp;] om. H.



- Thre myhti capteyns wern on the tother side,  
 The first[e] Zestro, Bochas tellith thus,  
 And the second that was ther lord & guide  
 Callid Midare, the thridde Pharbanasus,  
 On se and lond in armys ful pompous.  
 But of his knihthod and magnanymyte  
 Alcibiades took hem all[e] thre.
- Strong was the fiht or that thei wer[e] take,  
 Of al ther meyne away ther scaped non;  
 The duk that day gan swich a slauhtre make  
 Of hih prowesse vpon his mortal foon,  
 Cast ouerboord almost euerichon,  
 And aftir that, whan he cam to londe,  
 A newe bataille met hym on the stronde,
- Swich wait was leid aboute hym enviroun  
 Of his enmyes be sodeyn auenture.  
 But of Athenys this myhti champioun,  
 Which myhte in armys most souereynli endure,  
 Made on his foon a [newe] disconfiture,  
 Thus in short tyme this prince in his estaat  
 On lond and se was twies laureat.
- And aftir that, he list nat for to cesse  
 Nor tabide the space off halff a day:  
 The comoun proffit of his toum tenresse,  
 Toward Asie he took the riht[e] way,  
 And toums, castellis that wer take away,  
 Which apertened to Athenys of riht,  
 He gat ageyn, ful lik a manli kniht.
- Maugre all that to hym wer contrarye,  
 Or wrouhte ageyn hym be rebellious,  
 Thoruhout [al] Asie in the land of Darie  
 He knihtli brouht hem to subieccioun,  
 Ageyn whos swerd halp no proteccioun.  
 And fynal labour was off his entente,  
 The comoun proffit off his toum taugmente.
3515. Thre] The H.  
 3517. ther] be H.  
 3518. Midarus P, Pharbanazus P.  
 3520. and] and of his R.  
 3523. non] nat oon H.  
 3532. myhte] myhty R.  
 3535. æ] watir R, H, J, R 3, watyr H 5, water P.  
 3541. to] of R.  
 3546. to] in R.
- and captured  
 their three  
 captains,  
 Zestro,  
 Midarus and  
 Pharnabazus,  
 3516
- and destroyed  
 all their men.  
 3520
- 3524
- 3528
- On landing he  
 again defeated  
 the enemy.  
 3532
- 3536 After that he  
 went to Asia  
 and recaptured  
 towns and  
 castles that  
 belonged to  
 Athens  
 3540
- and brought  
 their inhabi-  
 tants again to  
 subjection.  
 3544
- 3548

Returning to Athens, he was received with joy and great honour.

And with this glorie and with this hih noblesse  
He to Athenys repaired is ageyn;  
And al the cite, with ioie & gret gladnesse, 3552  
Cam out to meete hym upon a wol fair pleyn.  
And that his triumphes sholde openli be seyn,  
Bothe old & yong, with ful glad visages,  
Of ther goddis brouht out the images. 3556

The people cried, "Welcome, victorious prince, our protector and shield against all violence."

This was the[r] cry & noise of al the pres:  
"Victorious prince, whos triumphes marciall  
Shal euer be songe with loude and newe ences  
Tofor the goddis, which been inmortal, 3560  
Wolkome, wolkome! our protectour, our wall,  
Sheeld of our weelfare ageyn al violence,  
Phebus of knihthod, & swerd of our diffence!"

By their strange praise they made him an equal of the gods,

Thus with ther goddis thei maden hym egall 3564  
Bi vnkouth praisyng of paganysme rihtis,  
Lik as he hadde be verray inmortal,  
And sang refreites to comende his merites.  
Tenhaunce his glorie\* thei sette al ther delites, 3568  
And with the liht[e] of eternal fame,  
Sette up torchis tenlumyne with his name.

and hallowed certain days in honour of his prowess, until Fortune blinded his eyes with prosperity.

Thus certeyn daies thei halwed of entent,  
Thoruh [al] the cite for his hih prowessse, 3572  
Til Fortune hath his eyen blent  
With newe fauour of worldli fals suetnesse.  
For al hir\* sugir is meynt with bittirnesse, —  
A bait of hony, shad out at pryme face, 3576  
With mortall venym hid vndir to manace.

When he thought he stood highest in her favour she brought misfortune on his people.

For in his hiest clymbyng up aloffte,  
And in thascence of Fortunys wheel,  
Aftir hir custum, as she hath ful ofte, 3580  
Whan he best wende for tastonde weel,  
She drouh hir fauour from hym euerideel,  
Made the people vndir his obeissaunce  
To falle in myscheeff for lak of gouernaunce. 3584

3557. the] ther R.

3560, 66. Immortal H.

3565. paganismes R.

3567. refrectis H.

3568. And tenhaunce R, P — gloire B — sette] om. H.

3575. hir] ther B.

3576. at] of R.

3581. for to astonde R.

Thus fro this\* duk Fortune gan to varie,  
 And his noblesse go bak & eek faille,  
 Whan kyng Cirus, successour to Darie,  
 Ful vnwarli fill on hym in bataille,  
 And gan his knihtis proudli to assaille,  
 Whan he dispurveid, void of prouidence,  
 Was ouerleid to make resistence.

[p. 188] Made reckless  
 by vainglory,  
 he was  
 defeated by  
 King Cyrus.

3588

For fynalli this Alcibiades  
 At myscheeff take, which he myhte nat recure,  
 Whan thoruh veynglori he was maad rek[e]les  
 His noble estat testablishe & assure.  
 Lak of forsiht caused his disconfiture;  
 And to ences of mor aduersite,  
 Ban[y]shed ageyn out of his cite.

3592 and again  
 banished from  
 Athens.

3596

Thus diffacid and clipped was his glorie,  
 His cite put in straunge gouernaunce  
 Be Lacedemonoys aftir ther victorie,  
 So that he knew no maner cheuisaunce  
 To refourme his vnhappi chaunce,  
 Sauf for refut, myn auctour doth reherse,  
 How that he fledde onto the kyng of Perse.

3600 He fled for  
 refuge to the  
 king of Persia.

3604

From Athenys of newe he was exilled;  
 And thretti personys, furious & vengable,  
 Chose in that cite, as Bochas hath compiled,  
 The toun gouerned, al-be thei wer nat able,  
 Vsyng a maner hatful and repreuable,  
 Thoruh ther rauyne temporisshe ther cite,  
 A thyng most odious to eueri comounte.

3608 and Athens was  
 then governed  
 by the Thirty  
 Tyrants, who  
 impoverished  
 the city through  
 their greed.

3612

A werm of dreed was bred up in ther herte,  
 Which suffred nat them to lyue in pes,  
 Among themsilff[e] whan thei dide aduerte  
 The grete prudence of Alcibiades,  
 How in manhod he was pereles,  
 List he wold aftir, for al ther multitude,  
 Knihtli aquite ther ingratitude.

3616 They began to  
 fear Alcibiades,  
 leat afterwards  
 he should  
 repay their  
 ingratitude in  
 kind,

And of assent tabreggen his lyff daies,  
 Thei ageyn hym of malis han conspired,  
 Afftir his exil, to maken no dellaies

3620 and conspired to  
 murder him  
 after his exile.

3585. this] the B. 3591. ouer ladde R.  
 3596. disconfiture H. 3604. for] to R. 3606. of] om. H.  
 3608. that] ther R. 3611. ther] þe H.  
 3619. aquite] aquiete R.

For to accomplishe that thei long han desired,  
 With brennyng hate ther hertis falsli fired, 3624  
 To moordre benvie, causeles ageyn [al] riht,  
 Alcibiades, the noble worthi kniht.

Five the day  
 of his death  
 approached.  
 No prince can  
 provide  
 against  
 false con-  
 spirators.

Thus the tyme approchid and the date,  
 Term afforn set be constellacioun 3628  
 Of his parodie and his lyuys fate,  
 Which was concludid, as maad is menciouñ,  
 Bi cruel moordre to his destruccioun,  
 Alas, what prince, with gold or soudiours, 3632  
 May hym prouide geyn fals conspiratours!

He was pursued  
 constantly from  
 place to place,  
 and his enemies  
 finally fell upon  
 him at night  
 and burned  
 him in his bed.

Fortune of newe gan at hym enchace;  
 From hir treynys that he nat scape myhte,  
 Daili pursuede fro place ay onto place, 3636  
 Thoruh Perse and Mede, thoh he wer out of siht.  
 Til that his enmyes fill on hym be nihte,  
 Slepynge, alas, to soone thei wer sped:  
 Whan thei hym fond, thei brente hym in his bed. 3640

It was too  
 horrible a  
 deed,—  
 such a good  
 knight to be  
 taken in his  
 bed and con-  
 sumed by fire!

Thus be moordre ther purpos\* was acheuyd, —  
 Alas, it was to horrible a deede,  
 So good a kniht, so weel in armys preuyd,  
 So renommede, so famous in manheede, 3644  
 For to be brent among the coles rede!  
 First vnwarli in his bed Itake,  
 And so consumyd among the smokes blake.

But this was  
 his end; and  
 he flew with  
 two wings to  
 the Palace of  
 Fame.

This was the eende of Alcibiades, 3648  
 Which in knihthod was most souereyne;  
 In werre a leoun, and a lamb in pes,  
 As Mars victorious, his fate so dide ordeyne.  
 To famys paleis he flew with wynges tweyne, 3652  
 Sone to Mynerva, to speke of hih prudence,  
 And lik Mercurie be notable elloquence.

¶ An exclamacion of þe deth of Alcibiades.<sup>1</sup>

O Fates, why  
 did you allow  
 him to burn on  
 the red coals?  
 He who had  
 lived so short  
 a term!

O FATAL sustren, which span the lyues threede  
 So short a terme; whi dide ye determyne 3656  
 To suffre hym brenne among the coles rede?  
 Ye wer to hasti to breken and ontwyne

3624. ther] the H — falsli] fully R.

3629. and] and of R, H. 3635. From] For R — nat] na R.

3641. purpos ther moordre, correction indicated B.

3647. smokes] coles R. 3652. fleih R.

<sup>1</sup> "Here Bochas makith an exclamacioun vpon the deth of Alcibiades," MS. J. leaf 78 recto.

His web of knihtehod, that thoruh the world\* dide  
shyne,

And caste of noblesse his bemys out most cleer; 3660  
Alas, that euere he fill in your daungeer!

O, out on Stix, and out on Atropos, [p. 189] Out on Styx  
and out on  
Atropos!  
That han of malis slayn so good a kniht!  
Out on you thre, that keepe your-silff so cloos, 3664 Out on you,  
three daughters  
of the dark  
Night! Out on  
you, Lethel  
Douhtres Icallid of the dirke niht!

And thou, Letum, that queyntest eek the liht  
Of Alcibiades, merour & lanterne,  
To speke in knihthod how men sholde gouerne, 3668

Ye slen the worthi, & wrechchis ye doon spare!  
Torcites lyueth, Ector is slayn in deede,  
Your funeral smokis makþ rewmys now so bare,  
To race vp\* cedris, ther braunchis may nat spreede, 3672 You slay the  
worthy and  
spare wretches.  
Your funeral  
smokes lay  
realms desolate,  
fostering  
cattiffs and  
letting the  
worthy die.  
Ye palle the laurer, ye make the firses seede.

Ful litil thank in kyngdamys ye disserue,  
Kaitiffs to fostre, and do the worthi sterue!

Alicibiades is passed into fate, 3676 Alcibiades has  
passed into  
fate; the Parce  
allowed him to  
die too soon;  
but the Sparta-  
ns were glad.  
Liht of knihthod lith clipped in the shade;  
The Parchas sustren to soone sette his date,  
Of hih noblesse to make the laurer fade.

Lacedemoyns\* of his deth wer glade, 3680  
Funeral fyr his bodi hath deffied,  
For hih prowesse his soule stelledied.

[¶] Lenvoye.

ALAS, this tragedie doth myn herte bleede,  
Mi penne quake of routhe & of pite, 3684 Alas, my  
heart bleeds  
when I see  
how insecure is  
the world's  
felicity.  
In my writyng whan that I tak heede,  
To seen the straunge feerful dyuersite

Of al worldli vnseur felicite, 3688  
How from ther sees, shortli to comprehende,  
Froward Fortune doth princis doun descende.

Alcibiades, of corage & of manheede,  
As is rehersid in bookis ye\* may see,  
Of gentillesse and of goodliheede, 3692 Alcibiades,  
most famous of  
goodness and  
beauty, bounty,  
prudence and  
magnanimity,

3659. thoruh the world] the word thoruh B.

3660. bemys] om. H (space left).

3662. O] om. R, P — and out] om. R — Antropos H, Atrapos  
P, Attrapos J.

3666. Lethum P. 3667. Of] And H. 3672. vp] out B.

3677. lich] lyht R. 3680. Lacedemoyns B.

3681. diffied H, R. 3691. ye] as ye B, H.

Of semlynesse, of fredam & bounte,  
Of hih prudence and magnanymyte  
Was most famous, as auctours hym comende,  
Yit from his seete Fortune made hym descende. 3696

governing  
Athens and  
dreaded by  
all the enemies  
of the city —  
yet when at  
the height of  
his glory  
Fortune made  
him descend  
from his throne.

Al the people, bothe of Perse and Mede,  
Whil he gouernid Athenys the cite,  
Stood in his daunger & gan his suerd to dreede;  
And al that wern rebel to his contre, 3700  
He chastised hem in ther most cruelte.  
But whan his fame gan hiest up tascende,  
Doun from hir\* wheel Fortune made hym descende.

Moordre and tresoun with pretence freendliheed, 3704  
Outward fair cheer, couert iniquite,  
Plesauce in speche, & vndir that falsheed,  
Hony shad out, sharp tailed lik a bee,  
Song of Syrenes to drowne men in the se, 3708  
In oon combyned, ther malis can extende  
To cause princis doun from ther sees descende.

Noble Princes,  
secure your-  
selves against  
treason, and  
remember in  
your prosperity  
that he who  
sits highest  
is most ready to  
descend.

Noble Pryncis, that seen so moche and reede,  
Remembryng stories of antiquite, 3712  
Afform prouidyng that tresoun nat procede,  
Beth ay most dreedful in [hih] prosperite,  
Lat othris fallyng a merour to you bee.  
The tourn of Fortune al auctours reprehende, 3716  
Wher who sit hiest is rediest to descende.

¶ A Chapitle of wordly folk wich desire to be magnified.<sup>1</sup>

Worldly folk  
desire above  
all other things  
to have power  
and to climb  
up to the  
highest place in  
wealth and  
reputation.

AAFFT[ER] this processe, yif ye list to lere,  
Lich as Iohn Bochas maketh mencionn,  
That worldli folk most souereynli desire 3720  
To haue in lordshipe gret exaltacioun,  
And up to clymbe in ther entencioun  
Of worldli worshepe\* to the hiest place,  
Al erthli tresour attonys to enbrace. 3724

3703. hir] his B.

3704. pretence] pretence of H, pretensed P. In MS. J, margin (78 recto) opposite this stanza, "a notable ver[ity]," written in a seventeenth century hand.

3721. lordshipe] worshipp H.

3723. worshepe] worshepes B, R 3, princis H.

<sup>1</sup> "Here Bochas writeth ageyn the desires of the people," MS. J. leaf 78 recto.

- The feruent flawme of ther gredi desir[e]s  
 In mekil gadryng fynt no suffisance;  
 Ther hungri etik kyndelethe so the fires  
 Of auarice be long contynuaunce,  
 That her thrust of worldli habundaunce  
 On Tantalus ryuer abraideth euer in oon,  
 Drownid in drynkyng, & deeme ther part is non.  
 Ther may no tresour ther dropesie weel stau[n]che; 3728  
 The mor thei drynke the mor thei thruste in deede.  
 In Thagus floodis the depper that thei launche,  
 The gretter drynesse doth in ther brestes\* breede.  
 The hier water, an ebbe most thei dreede; 3736  
 Fals indigence ther herte hath so confoundid,  
 At fullest sees thei seeme ther barge is groundid.
- Thus ech man wolde to gret richesse atteyne; [p. 190]  
 With suffisaunce but fewe hold hem content; 3740  
 Who most haboundeth, now rathest wil compleyne  
 For lak of good — alas, how thei be blent!  
 Wher shal ther gadryng, wher shal ther good be spent?  
 Sum oon par cas\* shal hem therof discharge, 3744  
 Whom thei most hate, & spende it out at large.
- Withynne a bodi, but\* litil of stature,  
 Corages growe up to gret magnificence,  
 Which up tascende do ther besi cure, 3748  
 And in ther clymyng & transitorie assence,  
 Hauyng an hope of worldli apparence,  
 Lich as nothyng ther puissaunce myht trouble,  
 Nothyng aduerting how that Fortune is double. 3752
- Summe set ther ioie in conquest and in werris,  
 Tenbrace al erthe vndir ther puissaunce,  
 Lik as thei myhte reche aboute the sterris,  
 To bryng down heuene vnto ther obeissaunce. 3756  
 But yif ther power wer peised in ballaunce,  
 And countirweied a-riht in ther memorye,  
 Thei sholde weel fynde that al is but veynglorie.
- What may auaille hem ther fethirbeddis softe, 3760  
 Shetis of Reynys, longe, large & wide,

The hot  
 flame of their  
 greedy desire  
 for riches is  
 like the thirst  
 of Tantalus:  
 the more they  
 drink the  
 fiercer their  
 craving; the  
 higher the  
 water the  
 greater their  
 fear of an ebb.

Few men are  
 content with  
 enough. The  
 richest com-  
 plain most  
 of poverty,  
 and yet it may  
 be that their  
 money will be  
 taken from  
 them and spent  
 by some one  
 whom they  
 most hate.

It seems to  
 them as if noth-  
 ing could impair  
 their worldly  
 power; they  
 forget that  
 Fortune is  
 double.

Some are for  
 wars and  
 conquest,—as if  
 they could  
 reach above  
 the stars; but  
 if their power  
 were rightly  
 weighed they  
 would find it  
 only vainglory.  
 What do their  
 luxuries and  
 vicious com-  
 panions avail  
 them?

3727. hungri] gredy H. 3735. brestes] hertis B — breede]  
 bleede H.

3740. hold them but fewe R. 3744. par cas] parchas B.

3746. but] ful B, J. 3753. ioie] loyes H.

3756. vnto] to R. 3761. reynes R, Reyns H.

Duyers deuises or clothes chaunged ofte,  
 Or vicious mene walking be ther side, —  
 Void of vertu, ambitious in ther pride, 3764  
 Which causeth princis, be report of swich fame,  
 For ther mysleuyng to han an heuy name.

For their idleness and lust and their support of vice and sustaining of liars, God will not suffer them to last long.

And thus for lak of vertuous dilligence,  
 Thoruh fals luxure and froward idilnesse, 3768  
 And upon flatereris thoutragous expence,  
 Support of wrong oppressing rihtwisnesse,  
 Wher lesyngmongeres haue an interesse,  
 Whom to susteene whan princis do *per* cure, 3772  
 God wil nat suffre that thei shal long endure.

The office of princes is to maintain right, to relieve and not oppress the poor and to temper vengeance with mercy.

Offise of princis is to supporte riht,  
 His suerd of knihtod fro wrongis to restreyne,  
 The poore releuyng, toppresse hem nat with myht, 3776  
 His olde seruantes weel preved nat disdeyne,  
 His hasti rigour and his vengauunce sodeyne  
 Lat' merci temple, to doom or he proceede,  
 And God shal quite hym whan he hath most neede. 3780

¶ A Chapitle of men doing Such thing as þey be dispo[s]ed to.<sup>1</sup>

Bochas tells us that nothing may avail more to virtue than industry. Each man is glad to do that for which he has most talent.

**M**YN auctour Bochas makth a *rehersaile*,  
 In eschewyng of froward idilnesse,  
 That onto vertu may [no thyng] mor auaille  
 Than\* dilligent labour and honest bisynesse; 3784  
 And so concludyng, ful pleynli doth *expresse*,  
 Ech man reioyssheth (this sentence is nat glosid)  
 To doon swich thyng to whiche he [is] disposid.

Some work in astronomy or prove themselves in war-like deeds, and others rejoice in eloquence or study philosophy and poetry.

Summe ha[ue] ioie be heuenli influence 3788  
 To knowe the cours aboue celestially;  
 And summe of knihtod do ther dilligence  
 To preue themsilff in\* *actis marciall*.  
 And summe reioisshe, in ther entent fynall, 3792  
 In elloquence, summe in philosophie,  
 Summe, aboue all, to stodie in poetrie.

3763. mene] meyny P.

3768. luxury H. 3774. Thoffice H. 3779. he] ye H.

3783. no thyng] om. R, J, H 5 — may no thyng] nought may P.

3784. Than] Good B, R, J, H 5. 3787. to whiche] as R.

3790. do] to do R. 3791. in] be B. 3793. 2nd in] & in H.

<sup>1</sup> "Here Iohn Bochas spekith ageyn Idelnesse rehercyng how sum men haue ioie in o science and sum in anothir," MS. J. leaf 78 verso.



- The hardi kniht is seruaunt to Seynt George,  
 Meuyng of planetis sercheth thastronomeer,  
 3796 Martis smyth laboureth in his forge,  
 Harneis of steel mak[e]th tharmoreer;  
 But the deuisour, be dilligence entieer,  
 Be fressh contreuynge, out of the old entaille  
 3800 Fynt newe deuises of plate & eek of maille.
- The laboreer set hooli his plesaunce  
 To tilthe of lond in tyme to sowe his greyn,  
 Tencrese his seed be yeerli habundaunce,  
 3804 And that his plouh laboure nat in veyn,  
 Castyng his sesouns of drouht & eek of reyn;  
 And poetis to sitte in ther librarie  
 Desire of nature, and to be solitarie. 3808
- Swich as men loue, such thyng bei vndirtake:  
 Fissh or foule or hunte with ther houndis;  
 Summe of wolle sondri clothes make;  
 Be philisophre[s] was founde out first þe groundis, 3812  
 And of al studie thei sette out first þe boundis,  
 Caused poetes, pleyntli to conclude,  
 Out of al pres to lyue in solitude.
- Logiciens delite\* in argumentis, [p. 191] 3816  
 Philisophres in vertuous luyng,  
 And legistris, folwyng the[r] ententis,  
 Gretli reioisshe in lucre and\* wynnyng.  
 3820 Phececiens trauaile for getyng;\*  
 And of poetis, this the sotil fourme,  
 Be newe invenciouz thynges to transfourme.
- Poetis sholde esche[w] al idilnesse,  
 Walke be ryuers and wellis cristallyne, 3824  
 To hih mounteyns a-morwe ther cours up dresse,  
 The mist defied whan Phebus first doth shyne,  
 Studie in bookis of moral disciplyne,  
 3828 Nothyng coueite, but sette ther entent,  
 With moderat foode for to be content.
- The knight serves St. George; the astronomer searches the moving of the planets, the armourer contrives harnesses of steel.
- The labourer has joy in tilling the land, and poets of their nature desire to be solitary.
- What men love, they undertake, — to fish or fowl or hunt, to be tailors or philosophers; but poets must live in solitude.
- Logicians delight in argument, philosophers in virtuous life, legists and physicians in lucre and gain, and poets in transforming things by new invention.
- Poets should walk by crystal springs and climb high mountains at sunrise; they should study hard and be content with moderate food.

3797. Marcis R.

3798. Harneis] hands H. 3808. and] om. H.

3809. Swich] Suche R, H.

3810. hunte] huntyng H, to honten R, to hunten J.

3816. delite] delite hem B.

3818. folwyng] folwen H — ther] the J, H 5, R.

3819. and] and in B, H, R 3, H 5.

3820. getyng] wynnyng B. 3825. up] om. R.

Their chief labour is to reprove vices, not to be rudely offensive or to injure men, but always to conclude with virtue.

Ther cheeff labour is vices to reprove  
 With a maner couert symylitude,  
 And non estat with ther langage greeve 3832  
 Bi no rebukyng of termys dul and rude;  
 What-euer thei write, on vertu ay conclude,  
 Appeire no man in no maner wise:  
 This thoffise of poetis that be wise. 3836

### ¶ A chapitle of þe gouernance of Poetis.

Poets should be secluded from the tumult of the world and live according to their means and by the support of princely patrons.

**T**O descryue the disposicioun  
 Of al poetis be old ordynaunce, —  
 Thei shold be quiete fro worldli mocion,  
 And it sequestre out of ther remembrance, 3840  
 Fare competent vnto ther sustenance,  
 Drynk wyn among\* to quike ther dilligence,  
 Support of princis to fynde hem ther dispence.

They have neither land nor wealth; and when their purses are empty they fail in countenance. The support of princes is the best recompense of their sorrows.

For thei that lakke lond & pocioun, 3844  
 And can of lucre no maner cheuisaunce,  
 Ther coffres void, ther purs turnid up-so-doun,  
 And wante vitaille to fynde hem in substaunce,  
 Ther corage dullith, thei faile contaunce, — 3848  
 What mihte beste ther sorwes recompence?  
 Support of princis to fynde hem ther dispence.

Lords have power, churchmen gold, knights and merchants are well able to look out for themselves, but poor poets now-a-days may go begging.

Lordis in erthe ha[ue] domynacioun;  
 Men of the cherche of gold haue habundaunce; 3852  
 The kniht get good[e] thoruh his hih renoun;  
 Marchauntis with wynnyng ha[ue] souereyn aqueyn-  
 taunce:  
 But [poor] poetis (God sheeld hem fro myschaunce!)  
 May now-adaies for ther impotence, 3856  
 For lakke of support go begge ther dispence.

Dante, Virgil, Petrarch, Chaucer, — all prospered; for they had the support of princes.

Daunt in Itaille, Virgile in Rome toun,  
 Petrak in Florence hadde al his plesaunce,  
 And prudent Chaucer in Brutis Albioun 3860  
 Lik his desir fond vertuous suffisance,  
 Fredam of lordshepe weied in ther ballaunce,  
 Because thei flourede in wisdam and science,  
 Support of princis fond hem ther dispence. 3864

3831. a] om. R.

3837. This chapter (lines 3837-3871) is omitted in H, R, J, H 5, R 3.

3842. among] competent B.

3855. poor is supplied from MSS. R 2, H 3, H 4.

O welle of fredam, encline thyn eris doun,  
 And of thi bounte yiue sum attendaunce,  
 To heere of merci my supplicacioun,  
 In releuyng of myn hertis greuauce;  
 Oppressid with pouert, & kan no purueiaunce,  
 Sauff to resorte to thi magnificence,  
 Onli be support to fynde me my dispence!

O well of  
 generosity,  
 incline thine  
 ears to hear  
 my suppli-  
 cation;  
 3868 oppressed with  
 poverty,  
 through thy  
 magnificence  
 only can I find  
 my means of  
 support.

[How Malleus Duk of Cartage for oppressioun  
 tyranny was hewen in to pecys.]<sup>1</sup>

WHAN Bochas hadde rehersed of poetis,  
 Ther straunge studie & ther soley<sup>n</sup> writyngis,  
 And ther desirs of solitarie seetis,  
 In plesau<sup>n</sup>t placis to make ther duellyngis,  
 Beside ryuers & holsum welle spryngis,  
 Which acompliss<sup>h</sup>ed, he gan his penne auauce,  
 Pryncis off Affrik to putte in remembraunce.

3872 After John  
 Bochas (and  
 John Lydgate)  
 had told of  
 poets and their  
 desire to live  
 alone in pleas-  
 ant sur-  
 roundings, he  
 3876 began to write  
 about princes of  
 Africa,

And whil he dede his besi dilligence  
 Ther pitous fallis to putte in memorie,  
 First ther cam tweyne vnto his presence,  
 Ther old noblesse appallid & ther glorie,  
 Which, as hym sempte, withyne a teritorie  
 Of] Affrik boundis, longyng to Cartage,  
 Dide first appeere, most dedli of visage.

3880 two of whom,  
 Macheus, duke  
 of Carthage,  
 and Cartalus,  
 his son,  
 appeared in his  
 presence.

The ton of hem was named Malleus,  
 Duk of Cartage, of Affrik lord and sire.  
 His sone also callid Cartalus,  
 Whilom cheef prince & bisshop eek of Tire.  
 But Malleus, which heeld the gret empire  
 Of al Affrik, for his pompous outrage  
 Exilled was for euere out of Cartage.

3884  
 3888 Macheus was  
 exiled for his  
 outrageous con-  
 duct and sought  
 revenge.

Which caused hym in herte he was nat murye, [p. 192]  
 But ay remembrid upon his fel banshyng,  
 Gadred his peple withynne the lond of Surrye,  
 And in the feeld, whil he lay hosteieng,  
 Cast hym fulli to make no tarieng,  
 But in al haste, of knihtli fel corage,  
 Mauge his enmyes resorte onto Cartage.

3892  
 3896 Raising an army  
 in Syria, he  
 resolved to  
 return to  
 Carthage in  
 spite of his  
 enemies.

3879. his] this R.

3882. ther] the H. 3886, 90. Manlyus H, Macheus P.

3894. upon] on H. 3898. al] al þe H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 79 recto.

He sent for his son, who was prince and bishop of Tyre, to come and help him with all the chivalry of his town; but as it was then the time for sacrifice to Hercules, Cartalus preferred to offend his father rather than neglect the gods.

His father was very angry.

and venomous tongues made matters worse, for no poison is more baneful than the hateful violence of slander.

The festival over, the bishop went at once to his father. He did not even stop to change his clothes.

Tauenge his exil his herte was set affire, 3900  
 And his entent[e] mor to fortefe,  
 He sente in haste his lettres down to Tیره,  
 To Cartalus, that he sholde hym hie,  
 And brynge with hym al the cheualrie 3904  
 Of his cite, in steel armyd cleene,  
 His fadres parti to holde up and susteene.  
 But whan this bisshop knew hooli the maneer  
 Of this purpos, which ye han herd deuise, 3908  
 He considred how that tyme of the yeer  
 Ordeyned was to do sacrefise,  
 Aftir the rihtis of ther paynym wise,  
 To Hercules, which in that cite 3912  
 Aboue al goddis hadde the souereynte.  
 Whos feeste was holde space of certeyn daies,  
 Which for to halwe he needis must entende, 3916  
 And bi the custum make no dellaies,  
 But that he muste therto condescende.  
 And leuer he hadde his fader to offende,  
 As in swich caas, than thoruh neccligence 3920  
 Vnto his goddis for to doon offence.  
 Wherof his fader hadde indignacioun,  
 The caas arettyng to vnkyndenesse,  
 And therof kauhte a gret occasioun 3924  
 Ageyn his sone, of froward wilfulnesse:  
 For princis ofte, of furious hastynesse,  
 Wil cachche a qu[a]rel, causeles in sentence,  
 Ageyn folk absent, thouh ther be non offence.  
 And summe tungen venymous of nature, 3928  
 Whan thei parceyue that a prince is mevid,  
 Tagregge his\* ire do ther besi cure,  
 With fals langage to maken hym mor grevid.  
 But ther is no poisoun so weel expor nor previd 3932  
 As is of tungen the hatful violence,  
 Namli whan princis list\* yiue hem audience.  
 The feeste accomplisshed of myhti Hercules,  
 Al innocent of double or fals meenyng, 3936  
 The said[e] bisshop, of wil nat rek[e]les,

3903. Tartalus J. 3908. Of] & H. 3911. wise] guyse H.  
 3914. was] wast R. 3917. therto] for to H.  
 3925. of] in H. 3930. his] ther B. 3934. list] wil B.  
 3936. Al] An R.

Kam to his fader withoute mor tarieng,  
 Chaungid nouthur habit nor clothyng,  
 With al thensignes, & in the same wise 3940  
 As he toform hadde doon his sacrefise.

Anon his fader made no delay,  
 Withoute excus, it wolde be no bet,  
 Of hasti rancour, the silue same day 3944  
 Maad hym been hangid upon an hih gibet.

But on the  
 same day his  
 fader had him  
 hanged on a  
 gibbet.

Lawe an[d] iustise wer bothe aside set,  
 And tiranye, most furious & wood,  
 To do vengauñce in trouthis place stood. 3948

Who can or may tirauntes wil descryue,  
 Whos marcial suerdis be whet ay for vengauñce?  
 Ther bloodi thrustis doth thoruh ther hertes ryue,  
 Ther eris ay open to heere of sum myschaunce, 3952  
 Ther furious merthe, ther mortal wood plesauñce,  
 Ther pale smylyng, ther lauhtrre of fals haterede,  
 Concludeth euere upon sum cruel deede.

Who can  
 describe the  
 will of tyrants,  
 — their furious  
 mirth, their pale  
 smiling and  
 laughter of false  
 hatred!

Thei been mynistris to Parchas sustren thre,  
 Tuntwyne the threedis of folkis heer mortall, 3956  
 And verray cosyns, thoruh hasti cruelte,  
 Vnto the woode Furies infernall,  
 Children to Pluto, of vengauñce marciall,  
 Which for ther vices, but thei bere hem weel, 3960  
 Shal tourne in helle on Ixiones wheel.

Ministers of the  
 Parce, cousins  
 of the Furies,  
 children of  
 Pluto, they will  
 turn in hell on  
 Ixion's wheel  
 for their vices.

Thus Malleus, fader most vnkynde,  
 Lik swich a tirant shad out his cruelte, 3964  
 As ye han herd; and aftir, as I fynde,  
 Of furious herte and of old enmyte,  
 Be force is entrid Cartage the cite,  
 And slouh al tho in his hatful ire, 3968  
 That hym afforn had exiled into Tire.

Thus  
 Machæus first  
 slew his son,  
 and then  
 entering Car-  
 thage murdered  
 all those who  
 had caused his  
 exile.

Wrouhte aftir wil and nothyng aftir riht,  
 Gan robbe and spoille that noble famous toun,  
 Which made hym hatid in the peeplis siht 3972  
 For his outrage and gret extorsioun,  
 Hauyng no ioie nor consolacioun

He robbed and  
 spoiled until  
 he was hated  
 by the people,  
 whom it was his  
 joy to oppress.

3941. his] *om.* R. 3949. wil] weel R.  
 3951. thrustis] thyrst P, trustys H 5, thristis R 3.  
 3960. Childre R, H. 3963. Manleus H, Macheus P.  
 3966. 2nd of] *om.* R. 3967. of Cartage R.  
 3969. afforn] *om.* H. 3972. peeple R. 3973. For] for by  
 H.

Withynne his herte, pleyntli, nor gladnesse,  
Sauf lik a tiraunt the people to oppresse. 3976

They bewailed  
their misfor-  
tune; and  
Bochas says, that  
the lordship of  
princes who  
climb up fast  
to riches  
through pillage  
will not last  
long.

The people of Cartage sore gan to pleyne [p. 193]  
Vpon ther mischeeff and desolacioun.

And Bochas writ, rehersyng in certeyne,  
Wil is a stepmooder of witt & of resoun; 3980  
And wher that princis ha[ue] domynacioun,  
And bi fals pillage to richesse clymbe up faste, —  
Trusteth riht weel, ther lordshipe may nat laste.

Their wealth and  
worldly dignity  
are of no help  
to them if they  
are tyrants; for  
lordship is the  
love of a well-  
ordered people.

Ther grete power of worldli excellence, 3984

Nor ther acrochyng of temporal richesse,  
Whan thei be tirauntes, may stonde in no diffence,  
And froward wil[le] reuleth ther hihnesse.

For what is lordshipe, pleyntli to expresse, 3988  
In this world\* heer, yif it be discernid? —  
Loue of the people whan thei be weel gouernid.

Tyranny and  
oppression  
engender hatred;  
and when the  
people cease to  
fear him, a  
prince is but  
a man alone.

For tirannye and fals oppressioun  
Causeth princis to stonde in gret hatreede. 3992

And what is worth ther domynacioun,  
Withoute loue lat preue it at a neede?

Men for a tyme may suffre hem weel & dreede;  
But whan that dreed constreyned is & goone, 3996  
Than is a prince but a man allone.

Machæus is  
a good example;  
for finally the  
people rose and  
tore him in  
pieces.

Seeth an exauple how Malleus of Cartage,  
For al his castellis & tour[e]s maad of stonis,  
For his oppressioun, vengauce and outrage, 4000

The people of Affrik ros on hym al attonys,  
And hew assonder his flesh & eek his bonys,  
Caste hem pleyntli, on hym thei wer so wood,  
Vnto ther goddis to offren up his blood. 4004

His subjects  
thought that  
no offering was  
more acceptable  
to their gods  
than the blood  
of tyrants.

The people dempte, of mortal cruelte,\*  
Ther was non offryng so plesaunt nor couenable  
Vnto ther goddis to plesse ther deite, 4008

As blood of tirantes, which that be vengable.  
Thus cruel princis make the people vnstable  
Of necessite, which ouhte be compleyned,  
To wreke ther wrongis that thei be constreyned.

3977. pleyne] compleyn R. 3983. riht] om. H.  
3984. Ther] The H. 3985. Nor] To R. 3989. world]  
word B.  
3994. it] om. H. 3997. a man but R. 3998. Manlyus H.  
4005. cruelte] equite B.

Loo, heer the eende of Malleus the tiraunt,  
Which doth to princis ful weel exemplefie,  
To God about how it is nat plesaut  
Them to delite in no swich robberie,  
Nor pile the people be no fals tirannye,  
Nor for no talis be hasti of vengauce;  
For al swich thyng to God is displesaunce.

4012 The fate of  
Machæus  
shews that God  
is not pleased  
with kings  
who rob and  
oppress their  
people.  
4016

## ¶ Lenvoye.

RA D and considred, this saide tragedie  
Sheweth to princis a merour ful notablē,  
How thei ther rigour shal tempere & modifie  
Or thei procede for to be vengablē:  
For in a prince it is riht comendable,  
Rancour of herte, of cheer & of corage  
For to differre til that ther ire aswage.

4020 This tragedy  
teaches that  
princes should  
temper their  
rigour.

Ther hasti\* ire, [ther] sodeyn malencolie,  
The[r] colerik fumys, ther furie vnrestreynable,  
Ther vnqueynt fires with flawme of tirannye,  
Ther fretyng etik of hate incomparable,  
Lik bestial tiges, lik leouns vntretable,  
Ne wil nat suffre ther infernal rage  
Differre ther doomys til ther ire asswage.

4028 In their hasty  
anger and un-  
restrained fury  
and hate they  
are like tigers.

The roial leoun, of mortal gent[e]rie,  
Among beestis of force incomparable,  
Preueth nat his poweer nor his regalie  
Geyn beestis prostrat, which be nat defensable.  
And myhti princis sholde, in caas semblable,  
For innocentes take merci in morgage,  
Respytyng rigour til ther ire asswage.

4032 The lion does  
not prove his  
might on de-  
fenceless  
creatures.  
Princes should  
follow his  
example.  
4036

Ther sparle of vengauce is quiked in partie  
Be wyndis foure, fell and abhomynable:  
Blast of detraccioun, & blast of flaterie,  
Blast of fals rowneris, that forge many a fable,  
And blast of bribours, most vicious & coupable,

4040 Detraction,  
flattery, deceit,  
and extortion  
fan the flame  
of their rage.

4012. Manlyus H. 4016. fals] om. H.

4026. hasti and sodeyn are transposed B — 1st Ther] The H.

4027. 1st Ther] The H, R 3 — 2nd ther] the J, be H.

4029. etik] fretyk R. 4030. intretable R.

4031. ther] that R.

4034. beestis] al beestis H. 4038. Innocence H.

4044. blast] bast R — coulpatible R, H.

With smoki sclaudris & felenous fals visage,  
Causeth ire of pryncis that it may neuer aswage.

Let princes  
beware of lying,  
slanderous  
tongues.

For which lat princis, of noble policie  
Beware of tungis double and deceyuable, 4048  
Which with ther venym infect ech companye,  
Ther poynant poisoun is so penetrable;  
To folk absent it is myscheuable,  
So deepe fretith ther serpentyn langage, 4052  
Causing in princis ther ire may neuer asswage.

Let virtue,  
noble Princes,  
magnify your  
high estates  
and make you  
merciful.

Noble Pryncis, lat vertu magnefie  
Your hih estatis to make you merciabile;  
For moral Senec doth clerli speciefe, 4056  
The throne of princis be clemence is maad stable.  
Vengauce delaied, to God is agreable;  
And hasti rigour doth outragous damage,  
Whan humble requestis your ire may nat aswage. 4060

[How the substaunce of the host of himilcho duke  
of Cartage goyng to conquere Cicile died of  
pestilens & aftir himsilf slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

Himilco, duke  
of Carthage, was  
sent to conquer  
Sicily.

**A**FFTIR these noble myhti princis tweyne, [p.194]  
Next in ordre, with pale & ded visage,  
Toform Iohn Bochas Himilcho gan compleyne  
Thunhappi fall of his fatal passage, 4064  
Whan he was sent bauctorite of Cartage  
To conquere, thoruh his myhti puissaunce,  
The lond of Cecile vnto ther obeissance.

The Carthagin-  
ians believed  
that such high-  
handed pro-  
ceedings were  
lawful;

Thei of Cartage hadde an oppynyoun, 4068  
That it was leeful, aftir ther entente,  
Withoute title of riht or of resoun,  
Ther teritories & boundis to aumente.  
And for that cause Hymylco thei\* sent, 4072  
The mihti duk, ther noblesse to auauunce,  
Which off Cartage hadde hool the gouernaunce.

so their duke set  
out over the sea  
with a great  
army.

And for he muste passen bi the se  
Toward Cecile, this noble worthi kniht, 4076  
With hym he lad[d]e a ful gret enarme

4045. felenous] felons J. 4053. ther] þat H.  
4063. hymiliche R, Amilco P. 4071. taugment R.  
4072. cause] cas H — thei] forth was B.  
4076. this] the R — worthy noble H.

<sup>1</sup>MS. J. leaf 79 verso.



Chose out of Cartage, in steel armyd briht,  
 Ther foon to conquere of verray force & myht.  
 But Fortune gan at hym so disdeyne, 4080  
 That to his purpos he neuer myht atteyne.

Ground & gynyng of his destruccioun,  
 To be remembrid shortli in sentence, —  
 Ther fil of thair a gret corrupcioun, 4084  
 Which that caused a ful gret pestilence  
 Among his meyne, be vnwar violence,  
 And sodeyn myscheef that is upon hym fall, —  
 He loste almost his worthi knihtis all. 4088

Nih al his peepel was slayn in that moreyn,  
 That with a fewe beleft of his meyne,  
 Infortunat he turnede is ageyn  
 Hom to Cartage; and thei of the cite, 4092  
 Al causeles, of hasti cruelte,  
 Hath slayn ther duk, as Bochas doth compile.  
 Loo, who may truste Fortune any while!

But Fortune  
 so corrupted the  
 air that almost  
 all his soldiers  
 died from  
 pestilence,

and, returning  
 home to  
 Carthage,  
 Himilco was  
 slain by his  
 subjects.

[How heynon duc of Cartage was dismembrid.]<sup>1</sup>

A FFTIR whos deth anon þer gan succede 4096  
 A mihti duk þat callid was Haynoun,  
 Which purposed for to chaunge in deede  
 His name of duk, bi fals ambicioun,  
 And to be callid thoruhout the myhti toun, 4100  
 Kyng of Cartage; and therupon of pride  
 To fynde out weies he felli gan prouyde.

He was nat content a duk men sholde hym calle,  
 But of Cartage for to be namyd kyng, 4104  
 And lik his purpos that it sholde falle,  
 Fro day to day the menys compassyng,  
 How he myht fulfille this vnkout[h] thyng,  
 For to be crownid an[d] regnen in that lond. 4108  
 And atte laste this mene weie he fond:

Hanno, duke of  
 Carthage,  
 wished to be  
 king.

and day  
 by day sought  
 means to fulfil  
 his ambition.

4085. that] om. R.  
 4091. turnede] turny H.  
 4094. ther] this R.  
 4097. Hannon P.  
 4100. the] that R.  
 4108. crownid] crowned kyng R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 80 recto

He had a young daughter whom he intended to give in marriage to the son of a senator,

He hadde a douhtir yonge & tendir of age,  
Which of the peepel stood in gret fauour;  
And he hym caste to yiue hir in mariage 4112  
To a yong kniht,\* sone of a senatour,  
Which in the cite was a gret gouernour.  
And that his purpos myhte been atteyned,  
Day of the mariage & tyme was ordeyned. 4116

and arranged for the occasion a royal banquet,

And in his paleis, cheeff and princepal,  
This saide duk leet make his ordenaunce  
To holde a feeste ful solempne & roial,  
And with gret costis made his purueiaunce 4120  
Of sondry deyntes, which that in substaunce  
Wer necessarie in alle maner thyng  
Vnto the feeste of a worthi kyng.

to which he invited all the senators,

He gaf in charge vnto his purueiours, 4124  
That al wer redi ageyn a certeyn day;  
And to his feeste cam al the senatours  
Duellyng in Cartage; ther durste no man\* sey nay.  
And of his purpos to make no delay, 4128  
Thouh his fraude was nat apparceyued,  
He caste that day summe sholde be deceyued.

meaning to poison them; for he knew that they would never consent to make him king.

He conceyued in his inward entent,  
He to be kyng and regnen in Cartage; 4132  
The senatour[e]s wolde neuer assente  
To chaunge ther custum nor ther old vsage.  
He durste theroff vtte no langage,  
Kepte hym secre withoute noise or soun, 4136  
And fulli caste hym to proceede bi tresoun.

The nexte weie, he knew no bettir reed  
To his desir, than pleyntli to ordeyne 4140  
That of Cartage the senatours wer ded;  
Than wer he likli his purpos to atteyne  
For to be crownid lord and souereyne,  
So tacomplysshe his luste in alle thyng,  
And in Cartage to regne as lord & kyng. 4144

4113. kniht] a kniht B. 4114. gret] om. R.

4119. holde] helde R.

4121. Of] & H. 4124. in] a R.

4126. feeste] festis H.

4127. no man] non B, R, J, H 5, R 3.

4130. that day that R.

4133. neuer nat H.

4139. ban to his desire pleyntly H.

4142. For] om. H.

For yif the senat wer uttirli destroyed,  
 He sholde fynde no maner resistence,  
 Werbi his purpos sholde been encloied,  
 Nor dur sei nay to his magnificence;  
 For in the poraille ther was no diffence.\*  
 And at this feeste he caste hym to proceede  
 Al his entent[e] to conclud in deede.

[p. 195] Once they were destroyed, there would be no one left in authority to oppose his wishes.

4148

His officeris he made to be sworn  
 To helpe destroie falsli be poisoun  
 The senatours, of whom I spak toforñ,  
 And that ther vitaille & deyntes in foisoun,  
 And eek ther wyntes, for short conclusioun,  
 Sholde with venym been intoxicat,  
 Thoruh al the paleis, & spare non estat.

4152 He informed his servants of his intention and instructed them to put poison in the food and wine;

4156

These officeres hadde a conscience  
 For tacomplisshe so horrible a thyng;  
 And secreli vnder gret prouidence  
 To the senat thei gaff therof warnyng.  
 And whan thei knew this mortal compassyng  
 Off duk Haynoun, teschewen al affray,  
 Thei putte the weddyng of prudence in delay.

4160 but their conscience forbade them to do such a horrible thing, and they warned the senators,

4164

Wherof this duk gan haue suspecious,  
 And of this mateer fill in a maner dreede;  
 Thouhte he wolde bi sum collusioun  
 Ageyn Cartage mor mortalli proceede,  
 And gan calle to helpe hym in his neede  
 Of Maurityne a kyng of gret renoun,  
 With hym bi force to falle upon the toun.

4168 who caused the wedding to be delayed. Hanno became suspicious and allied himself with the king of Mauretania,

4172

Made hym promys, to his auantage,\*  
 For to make free destrubucioun  
 Of [the] richessis, tresour and pillage,\*  
 Which that he myht fynde\* in the toun.  
 For vttr fyn of his entencioun  
 Was to destroie, of wilfu[l] cruelte,  
 The famous Cartage, the myhti strong cite.

4176 promising him a share of the pillage of the town,

4148. darz H.

4149. diffence] difference B.

4150. this] the R.

4155. that] om. H — in foisoun] infuson R, bi foisoun H.

4161. secretly H.

4173. auantages B, R, H, H 5.

4175. riches H — pillage] pillages B, J, P, H 5, H, R, R 3.

4176. myht fynde] fyndeb B.

and strengthen-  
ing his forces  
with the rissraff  
of Carthage, re-  
tired to his  
castle.

Of al the thrallis in the toun duellyng, 4180  
And swich as wer[e] born of lough lynage,  
To strengthe his parti, this was his werkyng:  
He made hem alle, bi mortal fals outrage,  
Withynne the myhti castell of Cartage 4184  
To keepe hem cloos, of malis & envie  
Ageyn the cite hymselff to fortefie.

But it was all in  
vain: the  
senate held the  
king of Maure-  
tania in check,  
and, overcoming  
Hanno and his  
churls,

But al for nouht: the myhti senatours  
Therof wer ware,\* and of hih prudence 4188  
Ageyn\* his malis and al his fals robbours  
Thei made hem strong, and thoruh ther prouidence,  
In especial tordeyne a diffence,  
First on ther parti to lette the komyng 4192  
Of Mauritayne the stronge cruel kyng.

And of assent thei list[e] nat dellaye,  
But roos attonys, and bi gret ordenaunce  
Ther false duk to venquisshe and outraie, 4196  
Hym and his cherlis thei brouhte to vtraunce,  
Fill upon hym with a gret puissaunce,  
And fynalli, procedyng off resoun,  
This was his doom, bauys of al the toun: 4200

stripped him of  
his garments and  
hewed him in  
pieces.

First, of this duk as it is remembrid,  
He was dispoilled, his doublet eek vnlacid,  
Ioynt fro ioynt hewen and dismembrid,  
And from his hed his eyen out arraced. 4204  
And riht as he hadde afforn compassid  
To haue destroyed his owne myhti toun,  
As ye han herd, [he] reseceyued his guerdoun.

### ¶ Lenvoye.

Thus these two  
rich and mighty  
princes of  
Carthage were  
slain. The one  
without cause,

**T**HIS tragedie doth pitousli compleyne, 4208  
And maketh a maner lamentacioun  
Of thes riche myhti princis tweyne,  
Slayn in Cartage, as maad is mencion.  
Causeles the ton,\* sauf bi thoccasioun, 4212  
That pestilence in his froward viage  
Slouh al his people, that wer born in Cartage.

4188. wer ware] war B, R, J.

4189. Ageyns B, Geyn J. 4197. chorlis R, Chorlis H.

4205. afforn as he had H. 4210. myhti riche R.

4212. ton] toun B, J, townz (om. the) R.

- Fortune also gan frowardli disdeyne  
 Ageyn this riche mihti duk Haynoun,  
 Whan he of malis gan mortalli ordeyne  
 The senatours to moordren of his toun,  
 At his feeste bi crafft of fals poisoun,  
 As ye han herd, rehersed his outrage.  
 He was ageynward dismembrid in Cartage.
- Who doth vengauce, vengauce shal atteyne,  
 In ech estaat, withoute excepcioun,  
 And who of pite vengauce doth restreyne,  
 He shal of merci reseveye the guerdoun:  
 For riht requereth, of trouthe & of resoun,  
 Cruel princis shal haue for ther wage  
 Deth, lik this duk, dismembrid in Cartage.
- Noble Princis, doth your besi peyne  
 For to preserue fro rebelloun  
 The comoun peple, which stant in noun certeyne,  
 With eueri wynd turnyng up-so-doun.  
 Aftir Fortune thei chaunge affeccioune,  
 Turnyng ther hertis with trist or glad visage,  
 Lik as the peple dide whilom in Cartage.

4216 the other for  
his malice and  
deceit.

4220

4224 He who does  
vengeance shal  
reap vengeance,  
and he who  
restrains his  
hand for mercy  
shall receive  
mercy's reward.

4228

[p. 196] Noble Princes,  
do your best  
to keep the  
fickle common  
people from  
rebellion.

4232

### ¶ Thautour a-geyn couetous Peple.<sup>1</sup>

- N**ATURE þat is content with lital thyng,  
 The wise, war, þe circumspect goddesse,  
 Which vnder God in heuen aboue regnyng,  
 This world to gouerne is callid themperesse,  
 Mooder of richessis, the first founderesse,  
 Which cerchid out bi hir artificeres  
 The straunge tresours hid in the myneres.
- This noble ladi, this princesse most famous,  
 Knowyng of man thunkouth condiciouns,  
 Sauh bexperience richessis wer noious, —  
 In hym teclipse the disposiciouns,  
 And conveie his inclynaciouns  
 Bi a wrong weie vertu to sette aside,  
 How couetise was a ful pereilous guide.

4236 The wise  
Goddess of  
Nature, empress  
of the world  
and mother of  
wealth, first laid  
up treasures in  
mines.

4240

4244 She knew the  
evils of  
covetousness

4248

4221. He] And H.

4234. or] & R.

4238. above in hevene H. 4239. This] The R.

4247. conveie] conveyne R. 4249. perlious R.

<sup>1</sup> The same beading in J, 80 verso.

- and avarice,  
by which men  
are incited to  
delve in the  
earth for trea-  
sure.
- For auarise, to al vertu contraire,  
The gredi werm, the serpent vnstaunchable,  
Man to be-traisshe with promyses debonaire, 4252  
At prime face soote and agreable,  
Tauht hym of nature bi craft most deceyuable,  
Thoruh sotil serchyng, as it wer for the nonys,  
First out of erthe to delue precious stonis. 4256
- Rich metals are  
sought for and  
ships with ther  
broad sails con-  
trived out of  
desire for gain.
- Of riche myneris thei serche the entrailles,  
To fynde out metallis for worldli auantages,  
Contryued shippis with ther brode sailles  
Bi dyuers sees to make ther passages. 4260  
And couetise ordeyned first viages,  
Caused princis ride in londis ferre,  
Ech ageyn other for to gynne a werre.
- Wars are  
begun for  
avarice; robbery,  
murder, and  
extortion
- Off auarice gan first thes robberies, 4264  
Await of brigautis and al extort pillages,  
Moordre, slauhtre & couert briberies,  
Of old contreuid, furious fel damages,  
Wrouht and acheuid in al maner ages. 4268  
Now in thes daies, lat set it at a preeff,  
Fals couetise caused al swich myscheeff.
- spring from  
covetousness,
- She was first roote of fals extorsioun,  
To spoile the people, mooder of rauyne, 4272  
And sterere up\* of oppressioun:  
To take bi force, this was hir doctrine.  
And as myn auctour doth pleyntly determyne  
And concludeth in ful pitous wise, 4276  
Roote of al euil is fals couetise.
- the nurse  
of strife,  
mistress of  
wilful violence,  
rebellion and  
the subversion  
of realms.
- She was eek norice of contek & of striff,  
Maistresse of moordre and wilful violence,  
Maad men to iupart boodi, good & lyff, 4280  
Caused discencioun and disobedience,  
Gruchchyng of comouns, withdrauht of reuerence,  
Bi rigerous constreynt sodeyn rebellious,  
Rumour in rewmys, unwar subuersiouns. 4284

4250. to] is to.

4252. promyses] promysse R.

4257. myneris] mines P — serche] serche out H, R, J.

4264. thes] the R. 4265. pillagies R.

4273. up] first B, H 5, R 3, H. (*The reading in R, R 2, and Sloane is up*).

4278. was] is R, J.

This froward dragoun ful of idropesie,  
Whos fretyng etik ther may no plente feede,  
To staunche his thrust ther is no remedie:  
The mor he drynketh, the mor he hath ay neede; 4288  
And the mor tresour, the mor he stant in dreede,  
With Tantalus thouth he swymme in the floodis,  
In Migdas well pleyne[n]th for lak of goodis.

There is no  
remedy for its  
thirst, though it  
swim in the  
floods with  
Tantalus or live  
in Midas' well.

This werm eek causeth that men in ther richesse 4292  
Haue dreed of theuys a-nyht in ther wakyng;  
And yif thei heere on coffre, bed or presse,  
Cat, rat or mous, or any werm meuyng,  
He weneth anon, withynne hymself deemyng, 4296  
That ther wer kome, with gret apparaille,  
Sum vnkouth pilour his tresour to assaille.

It causes men  
to fear thieves  
and to start at  
the noise of  
small creatures  
at night, and  
to stand ever  
in despair and  
dread lest their  
possessions fail  
them.—most  
greedy when  
they most  
abound in  
wealth!

The woful soule stondest euere in dreede,  
And ay abideth in labour & trauaille, 4300  
And of the goodis, which he doth posseede,  
Fallith\* in dispeir list thei wolde hym faille.  
Tween hope and dreed ther is swich a bataille,  
Thoruh entermynyng\* ech other to confounde, 4304  
To be most gredi whan thei most habounde.

Hope vnassurid with dreed[e] dispeired [p. 197]  
Meetyng in hertes make a ful mortal werre.  
Whan hope presumeth, with dreed he is appeired, 4308  
And lik a coward makth hym stonde aferre,  
Dul of his cheer as is a cloudi sterre,  
Which dar nat shewe the liht of his tresour,  
But euer tencrece set hooli his labour. 4312

Hope and  
Dread meeting  
in hearts make  
mortal war, and  
Hope becomes  
a coward,

He thar nat touche thyng that he loueth most,\*  
His cofres cloos be shet so vndir keye,  
Thouth he hath mekil, he makth therof no bost,  
Lest for his tresour men wolde hym werreie, — 4316  
Pleyne[n]th for neede, lik as he wolde deie,

not daring to  
touch the  
wealth he loves  
above all other  
things, and  
complaining of  
poverty lest he  
be robbed.

4285. dropesye R, hidropsie P.

4287. his thrust] his thrust this thrust R.

4291. Migdas] Midas P — well] wellis H, welth P.

4293. wakyng] walkyng R.

4302. Fallith] Falle B.

4303. a] om. R, P.

4304. entermynyng] vndirmynyng B, (entermynyng J, entyrmenyng H 5, entremynyng R, entirmynyng H, R 3, in-terminyng P).

4306. dispeired R.

4307. Meetyng] meevyng H.

4313. thar] dar R, H —most] best B. 4315. have H.

- Feyneth fals pouert to sparen his dispence,  
Oppressyng plente with froward indigence.
- Though his chests are heaped with gold, scarcity rules his household.  
And thouh his chestis happid be with gold, 4320  
With iren barris faste shet & closid,  
Fals scarsete gouerneth his houshold,  
That be non excesse he is nat vndisposid,  
His indigent herte so streihtli is enosid 4324  
To Herebus heir; and yit weel wers in deede,  
In grettest richesse to compleyne vpon neede.
- His heart is bound to Erebus, in whose iron city turns Ixion's wheel, under the guard of Tisiphone; where Sisyphus labours euer with his stone.  
This Herebus hath of iren, nat of ston,  
For auarice bilt a foul cite, 4328  
Wher-as the wheel tourneth off Ixion  
Vndir the boundis of Thesiphone,  
Wher Zeziphus may neuer a day go fre,  
But with his ston contynuelli trauaileth, 4332  
And the mor besi, his labour lest auaileth.
- Thus auarice, to ve[r]tu most contrarie,  
Fouæde among vices ful contagious,  
Euer bisi the restles ston to karie, 4336  
Now up, now down, with weri Zeziphus,  
Whos endles labour braideth on Theseus,  
Which heeld the bridel of frutles bisynesse,  
Condempned in helle to lyue in idilnesse. 4340
- Charon is the cruel boatman of couetousness, who sails the flood of Acheron.  
Off couetise the cruel maryner  
Is callid C[h]aron, whiche witb Flegonte,  
Bi many a streiht & many fel daungeer  
Sailleth in the floodis of furious Acheronte, 4344  
Vnder that dirked and cloudi orizonte,  
Wher auarice ches whilom nigardshipe  
For tresoureer his cofres for to keepe.
- The labour of couetous men in gathering wealth, their fear for its safety, and their sorrow when they must leave it forever, are the three heads of Cerberus.  
First to declare the labour in gadryng 4348  
Of coueitous men, as it is in deede,  
And countirpeise how ther streiht keepyng  
Is euer meynt with importable dreede,  
Sorwe at departyng, for ther mortal meede, 4352  
Which may be callid, of trouthe & equite,  
Of Cerberus the wakir hedis thre.

4320. happid] hepid H, happed R, J, heped P.  
4324. enosid R, enoisid H. 4325. Erebus P.  
4330. theophone R. 4331. Sisyphus P.  
4334. Thus] This H. 4337. up] vp and R.  
4342. Phlegonte P. 4343. fel] a fell H.



- The firste hed is vnstaunchable desir  
 Off worldli goodis gret richessis to atteyne, 4356  
 The mor ences, the hatter is the fyr;  
 The seconde hed is the dreedful peyne,  
 Which in keepyng, his herte doth constreyne;  
 Vnwar departyng, that sodenli doth falle, 4360  
 Is the thridde hed, that greueth most of all.
- This waker werm, that berth these hedis thre,  
 Is callid the werm of gredi couetise,  
 Whos bisi constreynt, restles perplexite 4364  
 Troubleþ the soule in ful furious wise.  
 Which froward monstre, pleynli to deuise,  
 Braideth on Idra, of whom poetis seyn,  
 On hed kit of, ther growe thre ageyn. 4368
- Euere at the tail of plente and richesse  
 Of custum folweth gruchchyng & envie;  
 For he that hath of tresour gret richesse  
 Is seelde glad, as for his partie. 4372
- Thus bothe tweyne stonde in iupartie:  
 The riche with plente halt hym nat appaied,  
 And the nedi with pouert is affraied.
- And yit in pouert is ful gret sekirnesse, 4376  
 Which is a tresour that no man wil assaille.  
 And as myn auctour Bochas berth witnessse,  
 Amyclates among[es] the poraille  
 Leued in pes, seur from al bataille, 4380  
 Heeld hym content with swich as God hym sente,  
 Whan riche wer armyd & to the werre wente.
- Vertuous pouert stant euere in sekir caas,  
 To wach his hous [he] hath ful litil neede;  
 But proude Pompeie assegid in Duras, 4384  
 For feer of Iulius stood in gret[e] dreede.  
 But peepelis rude take heerof non heede,—  
 Swich as reioysshe hem for to sheede blood, 4388  
 In straunge werris wrongli to gete good.
- Stories olde ful weel reherse kunne [p. 198]  
 Diuers studies of folkis heer mortal,  
 First how Diogenes was content in his tonne, 4392  
 In which he made his loggyng pryncpal,

And the  
 serpent that  
 bears these  
 three heads is  
 the monster of  
 greedy  
 covetousness,  
 who troubles  
 the soul and is  
 like the Hydra.

Behind wealth  
 follows envy.  
 The rich man  
 is seldom glad.

And yet, in  
 poverty is great  
 security.  
 Amyclas lived  
 in peace among  
 the poor, while  
 the rich were  
 armed and  
 went forth to  
 war.

Proud Pompey,  
 besieged by  
 Cæsar, lived  
 in great fear;  
 but rude folk  
 have  
 little dread  
 of such  
 adventures.

Diogenes was  
 more content  
 in his tun  
 than Croesus  
 with his over-  
 flowing coffers;

4356. richesse R. 4379. Amiclas P.  
 4383. sekir] secre R. 4384. ful] but R 3, P.  
 4391. folk R, folke P.

- And sauh the cours aboue celestial,  
 Lyued gladdere amonges philisophres,  
 Than kyng Cresus, with al his stuffed coffres. 4396
- and, for all his treasure,  
 Sardanapalus came to an evil end. Sophodius, who had but a garden of leeks, was always glad and without fear of robbers.
- And yiff men wolde onto mynde call  
 The grete myscheuys folwyng on habundance,  
 And thynk[e] also how Sardanapall,  
 For al his tresour, kam [un]to myschaunce, 4400  
 And how Sophodius, porest in substauce,  
 Hadde but a gardyn ful of leekis greene,  
 And riht nouht ellis hymseluen to susteene.  
 This philisophre was euer glad & liht; 4404  
 Ther was no wach maad aboute his tour[e]s.  
 Ful seurli slept he al the longe niht,  
 Hauyng no dreed of theuys ne robbour[e]s.  
 In somer walkyng among the fressh[e] flour[e]s, 4408  
 And in cold wyntir, ful myrili & ofte  
 On drye strauh he lay and slepte softe.
- Cincinnatus cleared ditches for a living: content with little, nature was his guide.
- Cyncynatus, a poore laboreer,  
 Fowede dikes to gete his sustenaunce, 4412  
 Withoute gruchchyng, euere glad of cheer  
 Bothe in his port & in his contenaunce,  
 Dempte he hadde as moche suffisance  
 To his plesauce, as Cresus kyng of Lide; 4416  
 Content with litil; Nature was his\* guyde.
- Assured in his poverty, his heart was at ease. He did not care to live beyond his means.
- This poore man, in his pouert assurid,  
 With litil foode, & clothes but a fewe,  
 Hadde hertis ese & gladsum pes recurid; 4420  
 It liked hym nat ouer his hed to hewe.  
 Which thyng conceyued cleerli doth us shewe,  
 That ioius pouert conueied with gladnesse,  
 Gruchchyng auoided, surmounteth al richesse. 4424
- And if people considered what they endure for wealth, they would also realize how transitory is all earthly power.
- And yif that folk koude considre a-riht  
 Ther pitous sihhes, ther thouhtful bisynesses,  
 Ther woful labours, ther litil slep aniht,  
 Which thei endure for worldli fals richchessis, 4428  
 And of thabidyng, the dreedful sekirnessis, —

4399. Sardnapalle R.

4400. unto] to R.

4410. softe] full soffte R, ful softe J, H 5, ful soft P.

4412. Fowede] Made P — his] om. H. 4417. his] hir B.

4424. auoided] avoyed R — surmountyng H.

4426. thouhtful] rouhtfull R.

4428. fals worldly R.

Which thynges peised and callid to memorie:  
Al erthli poweer is double & transitorie.

And bi stories, which that be credible,  
To preue ther poweer is nat abidyng,  
But, at a poynt, slydyng and fallible:  
Whilom Masmysa of Munydie kyng,  
That was so mihti, bi record of writyng,  
For feer of Siphax, onli his liff to saue,  
Flede into mounteyns & hidde hym in a caue.

4432 No worldly  
power is abiding;  
Masinissa, king  
of Numidia, fled  
and hid himself  
in a cave  
for fear of  
Siphax and ate  
4436 roots, while  
Xerxes drank  
blood and  
muddy water to  
staunch his  
thirst.

And ther\* he fond[e] but ful smal vitaille,  
Constreynd narwe of indigence & neede, 4440  
Whan other deyntes, in myscheeff, gan hym faille,  
He gadred rootis and eet hem in his dreede;  
Eek proude Xerses kyng of Perse and Mede  
Drank blood and water to staunche his gredi  
thrust, 4444

Dreed and trauaille gaff hym so gret a lust.

Yit summe men wolde seyn, of auenture  
Thei wer compellid ageyn ther volunte,  
Thes kynges tweyne, swich myscheeff to endure, 4448  
Maugre ther will[e], of necessite;  
For casuel chauns rafft hem ther liberte,  
So that the rigour off this\* sodeyn rage  
Cam in be constreynt, and of no corage. 4452

Although, as  
some men may  
say, their  
poverty was  
forced upon  
them by chance,

But for al that, folk in ther pouerte  
On grete metis that hemseluene feede  
Ben also strong, as hool and fair to see,  
And also lusti preuid at a neede, 4456  
Vpriht of lymes ther iournes for to speede,  
As long lyued, the cause to expresse,  
Is onli this: thei do non excesse.

nevertheless  
poor folk, who  
live on coarse  
food, are as  
strong and  
long lived as  
4456 one could wish,  
for they commit  
no excesses.

To\* poore men the beste medecyne 4460  
Is due labour with moderat abstynence,  
Good hair in feeldis whan Phebus list to\* shyne,  
Voidyng dirke mystis that cause pestilence;  
Of heuy stomak thei feele no violence, 4464

Labour is their  
best medicine  
and the fresh  
air of the  
fields. They  
need no  
physicians or  
apothecaries.

4430. thyng R.

4435. Masinissa P — Munedy H, Numydye R 3, Numidy P.

4439. ther] thus B.

4446. men] om. H — seyn] fayne R.

4448. myscheeff] om. R. 4451. this] ther B.

4455. as] om. R, J. 4458. the] to R.

4460. To] The B — the] bi R.

4462. list to] doth B — to] om. H.

Thei nat enriche lechis nor poticaries,\*  
Themsilff to saue with vnkouth letuaries.

The rich are  
subject to all  
sorts of diseases;  
they eat between  
meals and live  
unhealthy lives.

But folkis riche werkyn the contrarie,  
Which in hem causeth malladies stronge; 4468  
For ther diet[e] eueri day thei varie  
With dyuers metis, and ther sittynge longe.  
And with al this, ther appetitis wronge,  
Take out of tyme, which thei may nat endure, 4472  
Which bi custum oppressith ther nature.

Thus Bochas  
says that pov-  
erty borne with  
contentment is  
most secure, and  
that covetous-  
ness with  
extorted wealth  
is the root of  
all evil.

And thus myn auctour, shoftli to deuise, [p. 199]  
Seith how glad pouert stant most in sekirnesse.  
And of al euel, he seith, how couetise 4476  
Is roote & ground, with fals extort richesse,  
Riot annexid, engendryng gret siknesse,  
Theron concludynge, how moderat diete  
Set soule and bodi in temporat quiete. 4480

[How Enagora kyng of Cypre was bi Artaxerses  
outraied/ and put from his kyngdam.]<sup>1</sup>

Evagoras, king  
of Cyprus,  
came before  
Bochas with  
eyes blinded by  
weeping;

**F**OLWYNG in ordre the processe of Bochas,  
As he remembreth next in his writyng,  
To hym appeerede, rehersyng *bus* þe cas, 4484  
Enagora, that was of Cypre kyng,  
His eyen derkid be manyfold weepynge,  
Because he hadde loste that riche lond,  
Which he toforn hadde conquered with his hond.

for he had lost  
his rich kingdom,  
which abounds  
in metals and  
lies far to the  
south.

This lond of Cypre, as maad is mencionn, 4488  
Of dyuers metallis is passynge habounde,  
Hath of richesse gret plente and foisoun;  
And of his siht[e], lik as it is founde,  
It stant fer south, with many hilles rounde, 4492  
And hath also many commodites  
Withynne his boundis off toun[e]s & cites.

4465. poticaries] apoticaries B.

4468. hem] hem silf R.

4474. to] om. R. 4475. how that R.

4478. gret] long R.

4480. temporat] moderat R.

4484. Cypre] Egypt H — Euagoras P. 4485. be] with H.

4487. he toforn hadde] to forn he H.

4491. site J, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 82 recto.

Touchyng this Cipre I can no mor seie,  
 Of which[e] lond Enagora was kyng,  
 Til he gan proudli for to werreie  
 With Lacedemonoys, ther parti sustenyng,  
 Geyn Artaxerses; & at ther meetyng  
 The said Enagora was brouht to outrauunce,  
 Put from his kyngdam & from al gouernauunce.

I can say no  
 more about it;  
 4496 but Euagoras  
 was conquered  
 by Artaxerxes  
 and put from  
 his realm.

[How Theo kyng of Egypt bi Artaxerses was dryven  
 from his kyngdam and fledde in to Arabie.]<sup>1</sup>

¶ Next Enagora kam the kyng Theo,  
 Of al Egypt long tyme pecessour;  
 And to Iohn Bochas he gan\* declare his wo,  
 How Fortune dide hir froward labour,  
 And from hym drouh hir frenshepe and fauour,  
 And sodenli thoruh hir iniquite  
 She cast this kyng doun from his roial see.  
 She list hir malis from hym nat differre,  
 Ne wolde nat suffre hym to lyue in pes,  
 But caused hym to gynne a froward werre  
 Ageyn the said myhti Artaxerses,  
 Wenyng therbi tauue had a gret encre, —  
 Gadred shippes and made a gret arme  
 In his entent tamette hym on the se.  
 To Lacedemonois he was fauourable,  
 Sent hem vessellis stuffid with vitaille,  
 Dempte of pride that hymself was able  
 With Artaxerses to holden a bataille.  
 But hasti trust doth foolis ofte faille,  
 For this Theo was aftir anon riht  
 Dryue out of Egypt and Iput to fliht.  
 Artaxerses pursuede hym so sore,  
 Toform his face he durste nat appeere, —  
 Fledde in Tarabie, myn auctour seith no more;  
 Ban[ys]hed fro Egypt, dedli of face & cheere.  
 And of his fate who-so list to lere,  
 He was depryued fro kyngli dignite  
 And bi Fortune cast from his roial see.

Theo, who once  
 ruled all Egypt,  
 declared to Iohn  
 Bochas, that  
 4504 Fortuna  
 wickedly cast  
 him down  
 from his throne,  
 inciting him to  
 make war on  
 Artaxerxes

4508

4512

4516

in aid of the  
 Spartans.  
 But fools often  
 fail in their  
 hasty con-  
 fidence;

4520

4524

and, beaten, he  
 fled into  
 Arabia.

4528

4496. Euagoras P.

4502. Euagoras P. 4504. gan] gan to B — wo] om. R.

4508. kyng] thyng R — his] hir H.

4515. tamette] to mete H. 4520. often R.

4525. in to Arabye H, J, into Araby R 3, P — no more] nat  
 nomore R. 4528. kyngli] knyhtly H.<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 82 recto. No break in text B.

[How Amynta of Macedoyne kyng had by Erudice his wif, Alisaundre, Perdica, & Philip, that were slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

Amyntas,  
king of Macedon,  
grandfather  
of Alexander,  
had four  
children, Alexander,

AND among other, ther fatis compleynyng,  
Thoruh Fortunis dreedful violence,  
Ther cam Amynta, of Macedoyne kyng, 4532  
And to Iohn Bochar shewed his sentence.  
And to declare his magnificence,  
To Alisaundre graunfader in his liff,  
Hauyng foure childre be Erudice his wiff. 4536

Perdiccas and  
Philip, by his  
wife Eurydice.

The firste of hem was Alisandre Icallid,  
And Perdica namyd the seconde,  
The thridde Phelipp, in Macedoyne stallid,  
Kynge of Grece, lik as it is founde, 4540  
Which in richessis gretli dide habounde,  
And was eek fader, this noble werreiouur,  
To Alisaundre the myhti conquerour.

Macedon is  
the chief  
of the seven  
provinces of  
Greece

And or myn auctour fether doth proceede, 4544  
He makth in maner a digressioun  
From his mateer, lik as ye may reede,  
And gynneth in ordre a descripcioun  
Of Macedoyne, the famous regioun, 4548  
Among Greekis writ in especiall,  
Of seuene provynces it is the princepall.

and stretches  
from the Egean  
Sea to  
Dalmatia.

And so procedyng, he seith how that contre  
Strechchith his boundis aboute hym enviroun 4552  
Toward the se which callid is Egee,  
Foorth be Achaia toward septempryouu.  
And to Messie westward it goth doun;  
And who that can bi crafte the coostis caste, 4556  
To Dalmacia the name therof doth laste.

Mt. Olympus  
is in Macedon,  
and it is so  
high that  
neither the wind  
blows nor do  
rains fall on its  
summit.

In Macedoyne, he doth us also lere, [p. 200]  
Of Olympus stant the gret mounteyn;  
And in that kyngdam is many gret mynere 4560  
Of gold and siluer, lik as bookis seyn.  
And on that hill is neuer wynd nor reyn;

4532. Amintas P.

4536. Euridice P. 4538. Perdiccas P.

4541. Richesse H, Riches R 3, P. 4544. doth] do H.

4547, 48 are transposed in B, correction indicated.

4554. septentrioun R. 4557. Dalmatia P.

4562. neuer] nouthir R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 82 recto.

- For thilke mownteyn so hih[e] doth atteyne,  
That it may nouthur blowe ther nor reyne. 4564
- The kyng Amynta, of whom I spak toforn,  
Hadde in Grece many gret bataille:  
Olympiens in Macedoyne born  
And Illiriens, togidre he dide assaille. 4568
- Thoruh his wisdam he dide alway preuail;  
But with his enmys whil he stood most in striff,  
His deth was shapen bi Erudice his wiff.
- Myn auctour Bochas of hir doth diffyne, 4572  
She imagynede his destruccioun,  
Because she hadde another concubyne  
On whom she sette al hir affecciuon.  
Day set and tyme to his confusioun, 4576  
Fulli ordeyned, at a mariage  
He to be slayn bi oon of his lynage.
- He hadde a suster callid Vrione,  
Which prudentli espied the maneere 4580  
Of Erudice, and secreli allone  
Goth to the kyng & told hym al ifeere.  
And as the story in ordre tellith heere,  
Thouh she faillede that day of hir emprise, 4584  
She thouhte fulfille it in a-nother wise.
- This to meene, of hir iniquite,  
Of hir fraude and fals imagynyng,  
She was in cause thoruh hir contrariouste 4588  
Of the destruccioun of this\* mihti kyng.  
For the conclusioun of hir fals werkyng  
Was to ha slayn the kyng & al his lyne,  
She to haue regnede with hir concubyne. 4592
- But whan she sauh she myht[e] nat acheeve  
Hir furious purpos bi non auenture,  
Hir venymous malis upon hir lord to preeve,  
On other parties she dide hir besi cure 4596  
Enmytes & myscheuys to procure  
Ageyn the kyng, bi mortal fel assaies,  
With sorwe and trouble for to shorte his daies.
4565. Amyntas P. 4566. gret] strong H.  
4579. suster] daughter P — Eurione P.  
4580. maneere] mateere H, mateer R 3.  
4581. Euridice P — secretly H. 4582. ifeere] in feere R.  
4583. is misplaced at foot of column R. 4584. day] om. R.  
4587. hir] his H. 4589. this] ther B, R, J, P.  
4591. to slayne H. 4593. ascheve R.
- Amyntas fought many victorious battles against the Olympians and the Illyrians; but his destruction was plotted by Eurydice for the sake of a lover she had.
- Amyntas' sister Vrione, who heard of Eurydice's intention, told Amyntas, and although her plan failed, Eurydice succeeded in stirring up so much enmity and strife that Amyntas' days were shortened.

For who can  
escape  
the malice of  
subtile women?

Niht and day his lyff stood euere in dreed, 4600  
Hym to be-tra[i]sshe she cast out hook & lyne.  
And who is he that can or may take heed,  
Freli tescape, teschewen or declyne  
Malis of wommen, whan thei be serpentyne? 4604  
Seeth an exauple in this queen Erudice,  
Void of al vertu and ful of eueri vice.

No prince, alas,  
can learn by  
the experience  
of others not to  
trust himself to  
Sirens.

Alas, no prince can be war be other,  
To bridle ther noblesse witb reynes of resoun, 4608  
Swich as commytte, alas, bothe ship & rother  
Vnto Syrenes to rowe hem up and doun  
Thoruhout Caribdis to ther destruccioun.  
Bi craft of Circes, alas, thei wer maad nyce, 4612  
Blynd to remembre upon this Erudice!

Amyntas  
lived in sorrow  
and dreed; and  
when he grew  
old he called  
his eldest son  
Alexander to  
the throne, who  
made peace  
with Athens

Which made Amynta to lyue in sorwe & dreede,  
To reste in pes suffred hym ha[ue] no space.  
In thouht and trouble his liff he gan to leede, 4616  
Til be long processe deth hym gan manace;  
Yit or he deide Fortune gaff hym grace,  
His eldest sone bi wisdom to ordeyne,  
Callid Alisandre, his crowne to atteyne. 4620

Thus Alisandre was his successour;  
For Thath[e]nienses gan ther rancour lete  
Ageyn[e]s hym, for [he] with gret labour  
Bi ther suffraunce cam to his roial seete. 4624  
And for to sette his rewm in ful quiete,  
First with Athenys, the stronge myhti\* toun,  
Prouided a pes, of hih discrecioun.

and sent his  
young son  
Philip thither  
as a hostage.

And for tauoide al ambiguite 4628  
Of old debatis and of old outrage,  
First he sente into that strong cite  
His sone Phelipp, yong and tendir of age,  
On pes assurid to lyn ther for hostage. 4632  
And in that cite, the story berth witnessse,  
He gan to growe vnto ful hih noblesse.

Philip was  
given into the  
care of  
Epaminondas,  
one of the  
most excellent  
princes of his  
time.

He was commytted to the disciplyne  
Of a gret duk callid Epamynedoun, 4636  
Which to al vertu his youthe made enclyne.  
For of this duk Iustyn maketh menciou[n]

4616. he] *om.* R. 4625. his] this R.  
4626. stronge myhti] myhti stronge B, R, J, P.  
4627. provide H. 4633. that] be H.  
4636. Epaminondon P. 4637. youthe] *om.* R.



- Bi a maner recomendacioun,  
 Tofor nor aftir, as be his auys, 4640  
 Was neuer no prince mor excellent nor wis.
- First he comendith his vertuous corage, [p. 201] Justin says that  
 His hih noblesse, his knihtli excellence, he was the  
 And be discent he born of hih lynage; 4644 equal of Mars  
 And in too thynges concludeth his sentence, in chivalry and  
 Seith that he was of most magnifisence, a son of Apollo  
 Egal to Mars be famous cheualrie, through his  
 And sone to Phebus thoruh hih philosophie. 4648 high  
 philosophy.
- And Bochas heer doth his stile auauunce  
 Ful notabli with excellent langage,  
 And seith no tresour atteyneth in substauunce  
 To thilke richesse, auoidyng al outrage, 4652 And Bochas  
 As whan ther is be bond of mariage himself records  
 Knette up a knotte atween the excellence that no treasure  
 Of famous kniethod and of Dame Prudence. is so great as a  
 bond between  
 Dame Prudence.
- This knotte auaieth mor than gold in coffre, 4656 It avails far  
 And is mor glorious perpetuelli tabide, more than gold.  
 A myhti prince to been a philisophre,  
 Which can be prudence alle vices set aside, — 4660  
 For whan to manhod prouydence is guide,  
 And vertuous force is capteyn in the werre,  
 Lat men weel truste, that parti may nat erre!
- This Epamynoda, of kniethod sustenour,  
 Charboncle of vertu, as bookis telle konne, 4664 Epaminondas,  
 Of gentil maneres callid the famous flour, flower of gentle  
 And of hih noblesse a verray worldli sonne, manners and  
 Whos knihtli tryumphes be so hih up ronne sun of high  
 To Martis paleis, with the blissid souns noblesse,  
 Of Famis trompetis and goldene clariouns. 4668
- For he was callid the briht[e] cleer merour  
 Of rihtful quarellis the parti [to] susteene,  
 Of extort wrongis most iust reformatour, 4672 sustained just  
 Ay egal iuge, of entent most cleene, causes and  
 Whiche neuer koude nothyng but trouthe meene, put wrongs to  
 Wolde of custum for hate nor alliaunce right. He was  
 On nouter parti declyne the ballaunce. 4676 an equitable  
 judge and a  
 victorious  
 general who  
 laboured always  
 for the good of  
 the common-  
 weal.
4641. nor wis] of price H, of pryce P. 4643. knihtli]  
 vertuous R. 4648. hih] his H. 4649. heer] ther R.  
 4654. 2] the R — the excellence] excellence R.  
 4663. Epaminondas P. 4669. Famis] famous R, P.  
 4671. to] om. H. 4673. entent] ente R.

And to comende his vertuous prowesse,  
 His preuyd tryumphes, his magnanymyte,  
 His marcial actis, his knihtli bisynesse  
 In the getyng of many a strong cite, — 4680  
 And al his labour was for the comounte,  
 Which to augmente he wolde neuer cesse,  
 Swich ioie he hadde the comoun good tencrece.

Whatever  
 wealth he  
 obtained he  
 distributed  
 among his  
 followers  
 and set but  
 little store on  
 gold, always  
 ready to  
 assist his  
 soldiers and  
 leaving no  
 treasure behind  
 him when he  
 died.

This was also his vsaunce ouermor: 4684  
 What-euer he gat to parte it in largesse;  
 Of gold nor coign he sette but lital stoor,  
 For al his herte was sette on gentillesse  
 Bi manli fredam, and, pleyntly to expresse, 4688  
 He spared no good, it shewed weel in deede,  
 His trewe seruauantis to helpe hem in her neede.

He kepte nat in coffres his tresour,  
 Of his nature he was so liberall 4692  
 For to releue ech manli soudeour,  
 Swich as wer preued in actis marciall.  
 And for to holde his feeste funeral,  
 Aftir his deth, his story maketh mynde, 4696  
 Thoruh fre departyng ther left no gold behynde.

He extended the  
 liberties of the  
 Greek cities  
 and augmented  
 their territories,  
 seeking nothing  
 for himself, and  
 was throughout  
 his life a  
 student of the  
 sciences.

Alle his offises & famous dignites  
 And gret emprises in his tyme wrouht,  
 Encredid fraunchises thoruh Grece in his cities 4700  
 With libertes bi his prudence out souht  
 For comoun proffit, and for hymself riht nouht,  
 With gret aumentyng of straunge teritories:  
 Al this cam in bi mene of his victories. 4704

And among alle his knihtli excellences,  
 Bi dyuers auctours vnto mynde is brouht,  
 How al his liff he studied in sciences  
 And upon konyng set hooli his thouht. 4708  
 Bi manli prowesse of deth he rouhte nouht:  
 That was shewed, as it is weel founde,  
 The day whan he reseceyuede his dethis wounde.

4683. comouns H.

4684. ouermor] euermore R, evirmore H, euermore P.

4698. famous] knyhtly H.

4710. is] was H.

- He was hom born vnto his pauyllioun,  
 Al his armure with blood steyned red,  
 And on a couch[e] bi his men leid down,  
 And gan abraide as he lay half ded:  
 "Sires," quod he, "of o thyng taketh heed,  
 Hath any enmy this day in the feeld,  
 Whan I was woundid, taken up my sheeld?"
- And whan his knihtis hadde told hym nay,  
 Bi a maner of knihtli reioysshyng  
 He hem comaunded, withoute mor delay  
 To his presence that thei sholde it bryng.  
 And therupon ful pitousli lookyng,  
 Ful lik a kniht, & with a mortal cheere  
 He kissid it, and seide as ye shal heere:
- "Thou wer my felawe in armys [and] my  
 brother,  
 That neuer woldest my felaship forsake,  
 Seur and abidyng, ther was nat swich a-nother,  
 In eueri iourne that I did vndirtake.  
 To me wolcome, an eende I mut now make.  
 Aftir my deth my soule shal ha[ue] plesaunce,  
 The to be kept yet for a remembraunce."
- Afforn his deth[e], it is put in mynde,  
 The same hour, it cam to his memorie  
 To enquere, he lefft nat behynde,  
 "Ha[ue] we," quod he, "this day hadde\* victorie?  
 Or in the feeld who hath the palme of glorie?"  
 He praied his knihtis that day he sholde deie,  
 The pleyn[e] trouthe that thei wolde hym seie.
- And thei hym tolde platli al the cas,  
 How his parti hadde wonne the feeld of myht;  
 And with that woord he so reioysshed was,  
 That he his sperit yolde anon vpriht.  
 And so he deide lik a worthi kniht,  
 In whom is shewed what vailleth, in sentence,  
 Noblesse of kniithod ioyned with prudence.

4712 Without fear  
 of death, on the  
 day he received  
 his last wound  
 and was borne  
 with blood-  
 stained armour  
 to his tent, his  
 4716 only question  
 was, "Did my  
 shield fall into  
 the hands of  
 the enemy?"

And when his  
 knights assured  
 him that it had  
 not, he com-  
 manded it to be  
 brought to his  
 presence, and  
 said,

4724

[p. 202] "Thou wert my  
 comrade in  
 arms: after my  
 death it will  
 please my soul  
 to know that  
 thou art  
 kept for a  
 remembrance."

4732

His last  
 question was,  
 "Have we  
 had victory this  
 day?"

4736

4740 And when told  
 that his army  
 had won the  
 field, he died  
 like a worthy  
 knight.

4744

4714. leid] lay H.

4730. welcom R, H.

4736. this day hadde] hadde this day B, H 5 — this day quod  
 he hadde þe victorie H, R 3 (om. þe) — hadde] had the R.

4737. who hath] had R.

4738. that] the H, P.

4743. vp anoone riht H, anon vpriht B, H 5, R 3, R, J, anone  
 vpright P.

Through his teaching, Philip (whose father was slain by his mother) grew in knighthood and virtue.

And bi the mene of his wis doctryne,  
Phelipp, that lay with hym in hostage, 4748  
Gan encrece in knihtli disciplyne,  
Wex in vertu riht as he wex in age.

Whos fader was be furious outrage  
(Callid Alisandre, as maad is menciou[n,]) 4752  
Slayn bi his mooder be couert fals tresoun.

After Alexander's death, Perdiccas, his younger brother, came to the throne, and he too was slain.

Aftir whos deth[e], Perdica in deede,  
The yonger brother, the story doth deuisse,  
To the crowne gan lynealli succede; 4756  
Anon slayn aftir in ful cruel wise.

Swich fals[e] moordre ech man sholde agrise,  
As ye han rad[de], first of Amynta,  
Of Alisaundre and of kyng Perdica. 4760

[Ho[w] the proude tirant Aman was honged and  
the Innocent preserued.]<sup>1</sup>

Haman, a false tyrant and an Assyrian by birth, was chief governor under Ahasuerus.

**T**HE horrible fall furious for to reede,  
That folweth after of þe gret Aman,  
A ful fals tiraunt found in thouht & deede,  
And was of berthe an Assyrian,\* 4764  
Which, as the Bible ful weel reherse kan,  
Was cheeff maister, as men may ther\* conserne,  
With Assuerus his peple to gouerne.

His heart was swollen with pride, and it was his purpose to destroy the Jews and their law.

His herte was exaltid hih in pride, 4768  
To goddis peple most contrarious,  
His hatful venym he list nat for to hide,  
But lik a tiraunt most malicious,  
Of wilful rancour, fell and despitous, 4772  
Fulli purposed, and koude hym nat withdrawe,  
To destroye the Lewes and ther lawe.

Granted authority, he sent out letters commanding all the people of Persia to kneel down to him;

To his entent he gat auctorite  
Bi his fals[e] sotil compassyng: 4776  
Sent out lettres into ech contre  
Thoruhout al Perse be bidding of the kyng,  
That hih and low, withynne that lond duellyng, —  
No wiht except, — that peeplis al aboute 4780  
Sholde vnto Aman obeie, kneele and loute.

4754. Perdiccas P.

4764. an Assyrian] a Macedonyan B, H, R, J, R 3, H 5.

4766. as men may ther] who can weel B, R, J.

4768. exaltid was H. 4773. purposed] disposid R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 83 verso.

This was the bidding of kyng Assuer,  
 Whan queen Vasti was uoided for hir pride,  
 And Hester chose, a maide most enteer,  
 Was brouht to court with the kyng tabide,  
 Which hadde in youthe for to been hir guyde  
 A worthi Iew callid Mardoche,  
 Withynne Susis a large fair cite,

and this was  
 by the bidding  
 of King  
 Ahasuerus, at  
 the time he  
 divorced Vashti  
 and chose  
 Esther, who  
 in her youth  
 had always  
 followed  
 the counsel of  
 Mordecai of  
 Shushan.

Bi whos counsail eueri thyng she wrouhte,  
 Passyng fair and of gret meeknesse.  
 And whan the eunukis to the kyng hir brouhte,  
 She was accepted for hir gret fairnesse  
 Vnto his grace, hir story berth wisesse,  
 And ther cherished in especiall  
 Boue al the maidenen in the court roiall.

4784  
 4788  
 4792

And of al Perse she was Icrownid queen,  
 A pes comaundid thoruh al tho regiouns  
 Duryng the feeste, that men myhte seen  
 The kynges nobley in cites and in touns.  
 And of this feeste the riche roial souns  
 Cam to the eris of symple Mardoche,  
 Which cam with othir the maner for to see.

4796 and was now  
 crowned  
 queen of  
 Persia.  
 Mordecai heard  
 of the wedding  
 festivities and  
 went with  
 others to see  
 the sights,  
 4800

Tofor the paleis as he dide abide  
 With othir Iewes in his companye,  
 Of happ as he caste his ere aside,  
 He of too porteris the counsail dide espie,  
 How thei hem caste, bi fals conspiracie,  
 To slen the kyng som day of that yeer,  
 Lik ther entent whan thei fond best leiseer.

4804 and as he  
 stopped before  
 the palace he  
 became aware  
 of two porters,  
 who were  
 conspiring to  
 slay the king.  
 4808

Whan Mardocheus prudentli gan feele  
 The secre malis of ther compassyng,  
 Of compassioun he wolde it nat concele,  
 But made Hester discure it to the kyng.  
 Wherof convict, thei wer lad to hangyng,  
 As me semeth, a competent guerdoun  
 For al that falsli imagyne swich tresoun.

[p. 203] Out of com-  
 passion he  
 caused Esther  
 to inform  
 4812 Ahasuerus;  
 and the two  
 porters were  
 convicted and  
 hanged.  
 4816

4783. uoided] weddid H.  
 4787. Iew] Youhe R.  
 4791. eunukis] *om.* H, *muddled in* R.  
 4795. Boue] above H.  
 4796. crownyd H.  
 4799. 2nd in] *om.* R.  
 4809. best] *om.* H.  
 4814. Wherof] Wherfore H.  
 4816. swich] such als H.

Thus Mordecai came into the favour of the king and stood free of the power of Haman,

Bi which[e] mene the said[e] Mardoche  
Was weel accepted to kyng Assuer,  
Likli also to stonde at liberte  
Out of the malis and the fell daungeer 4820  
Of cursid Aman, which list make hym no cheer,  
But compassede in ful fel manere  
Hym to destroie & Iewes all ifeere.

to whom he did no reverence as the statute commanded. In his malice Haman had a gibbet erected for him before the palace — as if God were blind and unable to see tyrants;

This Mardocheus, the Bible telle can, 4824  
Withdrouh hymself for to do reuerence  
Vnto this tirant, the froward prince Aman,  
Lik as the statut comaundid in sentence.  
Which thyng tauenge be hasty\* violence, 4828  
This Aman made of hatrede to be set  
Affor the paleis a myhti strong gibet.

But who that caste hym for to do vengauce,  
And innocentis for toppresse of myht, 4832  
Bi wilful malis tagreggen ther greuauce,  
As God wer blynde and hadde of hem no siht, —  
But at the laste he wil of verray riht  
Pun[y]she the proude for furious violence, 4836  
The poore supportyng for ther long pacience.

but as Mordecai had in the meantime re-established the law of the Jews, Haman was hanged high upon a gallows for his pains.

As Mardocheus bi innoent luyung,  
Be mene of Hester and hir gret meeknesse  
Accepted was to Assuer the kyng, 4840  
\*The lawe of Iewes set in mor seurnesse,  
Froward Aman for his cursidnesse,  
Vengable of pride, the Bible ye may see,  
Was hih enhangid upon a galwe tre. 4844

Mardocheus, of prudence & resoun,  
The furious daunger of Aman set aside,  
Preserued his peple fro destruccioun,  
The tiraunt hangid for his froward pride. 4848  
Thus kan the Lord his iugementis deuide,  
Whan he seeth tyme, most myhti and puissaunt,  
Supporte the symple and punshe the tiraunt.

4824. the] this R.

4828. hasty] froward B, J, R.

4838. bi] for H.

4842. his] hir R.

[Off the ii. brethre, Artaxerxes and Cirus/ and  
Artaxerxes slouh his childre and concubynes/  
and how thei ended.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR the fal of Aman, dout[e]lles 4852 After the death  
Whan he beste wende ha regned in his flours, of Haman,  
Tofor Iohn Bochas cam Artaxerxes, Artaxerxes, in  
Most renommede his tyme of conquerours, his time the  
Which gan declare the\* sodeyn sharpe shours, 4856 most renowned  
With al the parcellis of his mortal peyne of conquerors  
Which that Fortune ageyn hym gan ordeyne.  
This Artaxerxes, as put is in memorie, and the richest  
Al othir pryncis excelled in richesse, 4860 of princes,  
Which in his chaier, famous of worldli glorie, appeared before  
And with his throne of worldli hih noblesse Bochas. It was  
Sat in his tyme, the story berth witnessse, a strange thing  
Hiest exaltid that was off eny kyng, — 4864 that he should  
That he sholde fall, was it an vnkouth thyng! fall!  
Kynges he hadde vndir his obeissaunce, Kings were  
An hundred prouynces, twenti & eek seuene, subject to him,  
Sone onto Darie, prynce of most puissaunce, 4868 and a hundred  
His fame drad[de] mor than firy leuene. provinces, and  
Non so myhti vndir the sterrid heuene no one under  
Acountid was that tyme, in werre & pes, the starry skies  
As was thys kyng callid Artaxerxes. 4872 was held to be  
He hadde a brother that namyd was Cirus; more powerful.  
Out of o stok cam ther bothe lynes. He had a  
But Artaxerxes, the story tellith thus, brother Cyrus,  
Was lord of greynes, of oilles & of vynes, 4876 and he himself  
And hadde also bi dyuers concubynes was lord of  
An hundred children, lik as it is told, grain and oil  
And fiftene ouer, tofor or he wex old. and vines.  
Of bothe brethre the power laste ferre, 4880 Between Cyrus  
Duryng ther tyme stood in ful hih estat, and Artaxerxes  
Yet atween hem ther was ful mortal werre, there was  
Ageyn nature an vnkynndli debat; mortal enmity,  
For thilke werris be most infortunat, 4884 blood against  
Whan blood with blood, lat no man deemen othir, blood;  
List [to] werreie, as brother ageyn brother.

4856. the] his B, R, J, P. 4857. the] om. H.

4864. was] evir was H.

4869. firy] fire R. 4878. childre H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 83 verso.

- and its cause  
was a quarrel  
as to which of  
them should  
succeed King  
Darius.
- And fynal cause whi this werre gan  
Atween these brethre, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>, 4888  
Thoruh which debat ther deied many a man, —  
The ground of al and first occasioun  
Was onli this: for successioun, —  
Aftir kyng Darie, regnyng in Perse & Mede, 4892  
Which of them tweyne sholde next succede.
- Artaxerxes put  
his brother  
secretly in  
prison and  
fettered him  
with gold,
- But Artaxerses bamaner prouydence [p.204]  
Put pryueli his brother in prisoun,  
That he ne sholde make no diffence 4896  
Nor gadre peep<sup>le</sup> to his destruccioun.  
This yonge Cirus, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
Was faste stokkid, and eek as it is told,  
That his stokkis and fetris wer of gold. 4900
- but he escaped  
and, collecting  
an army, met  
Artaxerxes in  
battle, and,  
after wounding  
him, forced him  
to retire from  
the field.
- And thouh it be nat remembred in Bochas,  
How that Cirus escaped fro prisoun,  
Yit also soone as he delyuered was,  
Throuh Perse and Mede ridyng up and doun, 4904  
Gadred peep<sup>le</sup> off entencioun  
Thoruh old hatreede his brother to assaile.  
The feeld assignede, thei metten in bataile,  
Wher Cirus proudli put hymself in pres, 4908  
To shewe his manhod in especial,  
Souhte his brother, callid Artaxerses,  
And gaf to hym a wounde ful mortall,  
Withoute frenshepe or faouur fraternall, 4912  
That Artaxerses, his wounde gan so ake,  
Constreynd was the feeld[e] to forsake.
- Cyrus then  
began to  
slaughter his  
foes; but  
Fortuna, ever  
deceitful, caused  
him to be  
wounded, and  
taken prisoner,
- And Cirus thanne, furious as leoun,  
His aduersaries gan mortalli to wake;\* 4916  
But fals Fortune, ful of collusioun,  
Vnder feynt smylyng a mowe gan hym make,  
Which caused, alas, that day that he was take,  
Afforn Iwoundid, it wolde be non othir, 4920  
And than presentid to his vnkynde brothir.
- and shortly  
afterwards he  
died.
- And thouh this Cirus hadde affor be founde  
Yong, fressh and lusti, & manli of his hond,  
Bi the constreynt of his mortal wounde 4924  
He died anon; for he no socour fonde.

4887. fynal] fynalli J — whi] whi þat H — this] these R.  
4896. ne] na R. 4915. Cirus] Cirus was J — a leoun J, R 3.  
4916. tawake B, H 5. 4919. 2nd that] om. H.



Thanne the two kyngdamys withynne Perse-lond  
 Fill to the hondis of Artaxerses,  
 In which aftir he lyued longe in pes.

4928

Thus a gret space, lik a myhti kyng  
 Al Perse he heeld vnder his obeissaunce,  
 Be famous noblesse gloriousli shynyng,  
 Hauyng of richessis most fulsum habundaunce. 4932  
 And as it is Iput in remembrance,  
 To mor ences of his prosperite,  
 In trewe wedlok he hadde sons thre.

Artaxerxes then  
 became sole  
 ruler of Persia.

The firste of hem callid Darius;  
 Arabratus namyd the secounde;  
 And the thridde namyd was Othus,  
 Manli\* pryncis, lik as it is founde.  
 And of nature as the kyng was bounde,  
 Vnto Darie, as it is maad menciouen,  
 Aboute echon he hadde affecciouen.

4936 His three sons  
 were Darius,  
 Arabratus and  
 Othus, but he  
 loved Darius  
 above the  
 others, and  
 deeming him-  
 self too feeble  
 to rule alone,  
 set up  
 Darius as king  
 beside him,

And for he dempte hym able to the werre,  
 Be likliheed, of yeeris yonge and greene,  
 He caste fulli his noblesse to preferre;  
 Of hih prudence thus he dide meene,  
 His inpotence to supporte and susteene,  
 For he was feeble in Perse to regne allone,  
 He sette up Darie with hym in his throne.

4944

Which was a thyng straunge and contrarious,  
 Ageyn the custum of Persiens and vsance;  
 But he supposed his sone Darius  
 Sholde in such caas encrease & auaunce  
 His fadres parti, of natural attendaunce,  
 And shewe onto hym trouthe & kyndenesse,  
 His impotence to cherisshe of gentillesse.

4952

which was  
 contrary to the  
 custom of the  
 Persians.

But in estatis ofte it doth thus fall,  
 Whan that princis be ronne ferr in age,  
 Ther childres loue ageyn hem doth appall,  
 Shewyng no frenshipe sauf for auantage,  
 How that thei may reioise ther heritage,  
 And in swich cas whan thei waxe stronge,  
 Thynken ther fadris lyuen al to longe.

4956

4960 But as it  
 often happens,  
 when princes  
 grow old, their  
 children's love  
 for them dies,  
 and they begin  
 to think only  
 of their inheri-  
 tance.

4932. fulsum] holsom H. 4936. hem] all H.  
 4939. Manli] Namli B. 4943. to] for R, vn to H.  
 4944. liklihoode H. 4947. Impotence H.

<p>This was what happened to Artaxerxes. Darius grew false and unkind</p>	<p>And Artaxerxes stood in the same caas, As in his stori pleynli ye shal fynde Be rehersaile and writyng of Bochas, How this Darie was fals &amp; eek vnkynde, Foryetifful, &amp; hadde nothyng in mynde, How his fader, the trouthe to reherse, Hath maad hym egal with hym to regne in Perse.</p>	<p>4964       4968</p>
<p>and rebelled against his father.</p>	<p>And to declare the firste occasioun, To his fader how the said[e] Darie, Bi a fals maner of rebellioun, Gan in his werkynge for to be contrarie, Which to discure I wil no lenger tarie, But with my penne in al haste proceede Heer to descryue how it fill in deede.</p>	<p>4972      4976</p>
<p>There was a fair concubine named Artusia, who belonged to Artaxerxes;</p>	<p>Artaxerxes, among his concubynes, It is remembrid how that he hadde oon Which, for to rekne wyues and virgynes, Was fairest holde of them euerichon, Callid Artasia, of ful yore agon, And was that tyme, hir beaute to descryue, Among Persiens the fairest holde a-lyue.</p>	<p>[p. 205]   4980   4984</p>
<p>and although she was well on in years, having once been in Cyrus' harem, her beauty had not faded.</p>	<p>And thow she were Ironne ferr in age, Lik as bookis list of hire expresse, Bothe of colour and also of visage She kept hir beaute &amp; hir natiff fresshnesse. Which was afor[n]e for hir semlynesse, To said[e] Cirus, breefli to termyne, Chose long afforn to been his concubyne.</p>	<p>4988      4988</p>
<p>When Cyrus died she fell to Artaxerxes,</p>	<p>But whan this Cirus was passid into fate, Which for his brother myht nat lyue in pes, Anon upon, withoute lenger date, She was take up for kyng Artaxerxes, Because she was of beute pereles. Aftir long tyme, whan he fill in age, She cleymed was bi title of heritage</p>	<p>4992      4996</p>
<p>and after he became of age Darius claimed her as a part of his inheritance.</p>	<p>Of kyng Darie bi his fader lyue, Feynyng his cleym[e] bi successioun, Al-thouh his fadir ageyn it dide stryve.</p>	<p>5000</p>

4966. rehersyng H. 4968. Foryetfull R, Foryetful P.  
4972. the] this R. 4982. Artusia P. 4985. ronne R.  
4986. bookis] bochas R. 4989. hir] hir saide H.  
4990. To] To be H — saide] the forsaide P.  
4999. fadres R.

And thus began, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
Of ther debat the firste occasiou<sup>n</sup>;  
For Darie caste, al-be he bar it still,  
Hir to reioysshe ageyn his fadris will.

5004

And tacomplisshe falsli his entent  
Of hir to haue ful pocessioun,  
Taforce his parti he made this argument:  
"Cirus," quod he, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
Regnyng in Perse the myhti regioun,  
And this story doth pleynli determyne,  
"For hir beute made hir his concvbyne."

5008

5012

It was in  
this manner  
that his quarrel  
with his father  
began. His  
argument was,  
that she had  
been Cyrus'  
concubine, that  
when Cyrus  
died Artaxerxes  
took her, and  
that now she  
belonged of  
right to him,  
Darius, by in-  
heritance.

And aftir tyme, whan Cirus was ded,  
Artaxerses, his fader, ye may see,  
Next hym succeeding in Perse, it is no dreed,  
List hir to cleyme eek for hir gret beaute.  
"And so," quod Darie, "she longeth now to me,  
Because she is so plesaunt to my siht,  
Bi successioun I wil hir cleyme of riht."

5016

Thus kyng Darie to his fader saide  
He wolde haue Artasia the faire.

5020

Artaxerxes  
agreed to give  
her to Darius  
out of affection;

And therwithal Artaxerses gan abraide,  
And ansuerde with face debonaire,  
"My sone," quod he, "I wil nat be contraire  
To thi desir, but of affecciou<sup>n</sup>  
Delyueren hir to thi pocessioun."

5024

Of his promys he aftir gan repente,  
Cast hym to make another cheuisaunce;  
And secreli his concubyn he sente,  
Callid Artasia, as maad is remembraunce,  
And thoruh his sleiht vnkou<sup>p</sup> purueiaunce,  
Vnto the temple, swich menys he hath souht,  
Of gret Appollo that she in haste was brouht.

5028

but he soon  
repented of his  
promise and

Wher she was veiled & maad a preesteresse  
Aftir the rihtis, pleynli, and the guise  
Of old paynemes bamaner hoolynesse,  
And ther professid for to doon seruise,  
As ther statutis constreynen and deuise.

5032

5036

contrived to  
send her to the  
temple of  
Apollo, where  
she was made  
a priestess and  
vowed to  
chastity.

5007. Of hir is repeated R.

5008. this] his H.

5011. playnly doth termyne H.

5015. hym] om. H.

5016. gret] om. H.

5017. now to] vn to H.

5021. Arthusia P.

- Duryng hir liff, it myhte non other be,  
She bounde was to lyue in chastite. 5040
- At this Darius  
went almost  
mad for rage,  
This thyng was wrouhte bi the compassyng  
Of Artaxerses, be froward ialousie.  
Wherof Darie, the yonge lusti kyng,  
Wex almost wood whan he it dide espie, 5044  
And gan compassen of malencolie,  
Furious rancour & hasti cruelte  
Vpon his fader auengid for to be.
- and, seeking  
revenge, allied  
himself with  
his 115 natural  
brothers, who  
agreed that their  
father should  
die.  
And his parti of force to susteene, 5048  
With hym he hadde, the story maketh mynde,  
His brethre in bast, an hundred & fiteene,  
Which to ther fader wer fals & vnkynde. A  
Of al this noumbre ther lefft non behynde 5052  
That fro this purpos onys list dissente,  
His deth of o will all did\* assente.
- But Artaxerxes  
was informed of  
their intentions  
and collected  
an army  
Yit of this straunge fals conspiracie  
Artaxerses hadde a knowlechyng, 5056  
Al-thouh the stori doth nat specefe  
How, ne be whom, he hadde therof wetyng.  
For which in haste, he made no tarieng  
To gadre meyne & make hym silue strong, 5060  
Hym silff tauenge of this disnaturel wrong.
- and resolved to  
take vengeance  
on them.  
For Artaxerses, lik as the caas tho stood, [p. 206]  
Thouhte it sat weel to his hih noblesse,  
To be venged upon vnkynde blood; 5064  
For lawe, nature decrees rihtwisnesse,  
And alle statutis dampne vnkyndenesse,  
Wherbi this kyng occasioun dide fynde  
Ageyn his childre, because thei wer vnkynde. 5068
- Some men say  
that a multitude  
of children  
make a father  
strong, but this  
is true only if  
they are  
virtuous.  
Somme men deeme how gret[e] multitude  
Of many childre maketh a fader strong;  
But therupon, pleynli to conclude,  
Vertu is cause, yif she duelle hem among. 5072  
But yif ther corage enclyneth onto wrong,  
And vicious lyff do ther bridil leede,  
The gretter noumbre, the wers thei must[e] speede.
- The offspring of  
a wicked line  
may corrupt an  
entire region;  
A progenie born of a cursid lyne 5076  
May thoruh his froward fals infeccioun,
5042. ialousie] Ieulosie R. 5044. it] om. H.  
5054. all did] thei B, R, J, R 3, H 5, P. 5058. ne] nor H.  
5067. kyng] thyng R. 5077. fals froward R.

- Outward be colour of trouthe thouh he shyne,  
 Vnder apparence and symulacioun  
 Infecte and corupte al a regeoun;  
 For, it is seid of ful old langage,  
 Frut of sour trees take a sour tarage. 5080
- This was weel shewed in Artaxerses,  
 That suffred his brother deien at myscheeff,  
 Bledyng his wounde, left hym help[e]les,  
 Which to his name shal euer been preeff.  
 Thus blood vnkynde vnkyndli makth his preeff;  
 For al the childre fro his stok descendid  
 Wer cursid echon, as heer is comprehendid. 5084
- Ther stock was first contagious of nature,  
 The griffes froward, thouh thei wer gret in noubre,  
 Which of assent dide ther besi cure  
 Bi fals tresoun ther fader to encoumbre. 5092  
 But ther is no shade nor no couert outhre  
 So closli kept, namli of fals[e] guile,  
 But the venym wil shewen oute sum while. 5096
- And thus the deth contagiousli conspired  
 Of Artaxerses sithe go ful yore,  
 Wheron tauenge, hys herte was so fired  
 Of furious ire & Ibrent so sore,  
 That he nat koude differre it ferthermore,  
 But with his meyne fill on hem anon  
 Or thei wer war, and slouh hem euerichon. 5100
- He slouh also al his concubynes,  
 That wer ther moodres, of whom I told toforn,  
 Suffred non to lyue of [al] ther lynes;  
 So of that lynage he hath the weed upshorn,  
 Fond among alle no greyn of good[e] corn:  
 Convict bi doom, whan thei wer presentid,  
 How to his deth echon thei wer assentid. 5104
- His clothes spreynt with the vnkynde blood  
 Of his childre, which he dide sheede,  
 Aftir whos deth in gret myscheeff he stood;  
 And so in sorwe his lyff he dide leede, —  
 Deied aftir in myscheef & in dreede. 5112  
 Deth quit with deth, & rage with rage:  
 Loo, heer the fyn of his vnweeldi age! 5116
5078. he] they R, she H.      5095. namli] oonly H.  
 5099. was] om. R.            5101. nat] ne H.  
 5106. al] om. R, J, R 3, P.    5116. 1st deth] Seth R.

for the fruit  
of sour trees  
has a sour  
flavour.

This was well  
proven by  
Artaxerxes,  
who let his  
brother die  
helpless, and  
whose children  
were cursed.

The stock was  
noxious and the  
grafts and  
branches  
froward,  
although large  
in number.

Artaxerxes fell  
on them with  
his soldiers  
unawares and  
slew every one.

He also killed  
his concubines,  
their mothers,

and after living  
the rest of his  
life in sorrow,  
he himself died

## ¶ [Lenvoye.]

This tragedy describes the enmity between two brothers, which led to war and the destruction of their kindred.

**T**HIS tragedie afforn declareth heere  
 The grete outrage of vnkyndenesse,  
 Atween too brethre regnyng bothe ifeere 5120  
 In Perse-lond, as ye han herd expresse,  
 Til dyuisioun, of al myscheef maistresse,  
 Gan entren in thoruh fraternal hatreede,  
 Which ageyn kynde destroyed ther kynreede. 5124  
 The werre aroos, contagious for to lere,  
 Thoruhout al Perse of mortal frowardnesse,  
 Of Cirus deth rehersyng the maneere,  
 How help[e]les he deied in distresse, 5128  
 And how the noumbre of brethre dide hem dresse  
 To slen ther fader — the story ye may reede, —  
 Causyng an eende of al ther hool kynreede.

Artaxerxes slew his children together with their mothers and soon afterwards died.

Kyng Artaxerses, with a froward cheere, 5132  
 His iniuries & wronges to redresse,  
 Slouh his childre, ther moodres eek ifeere,  
 Spared nat oon, of cruel hastynesse.\*  
 Bi which occasioun took a gret siknesse, 5136  
 Aftir deied in myscheef & in dreede,  
 Causyng an eende of al his hool kynreede.

The abomination of fraternal strife spread all over Persia, infecting the air with foul, slanderous blackness.

Loo, heer a sorwe nat particuleer;  
 For thoruh al Perse ran the cursidnesse, 5140  
 The crokid fame sprad bothe ferr & neer  
 Of this vengable, hasti, fel woodnesse,  
 The hair infectyng witb sclaudrous foul blaknesse,  
 To shewe be vengauce the contrarious meede 5144  
 Of blood vnkynde boorn of oon kynreede.

Noble Princes, avoid rancour, remember the mischief that follows blood unkind, born of one kindred.

Noble Princis, left up your eyen cleere [p. 207]  
 And considreth, bi gret auisynesse,  
 The woful stryues, the odious fel daungeere 5148  
 Sowe in kynreedis of wilful straungenesse.  
 Of al rancour your corages doth repressse,  
 Peisyng the myscheeuys folwyng on in deede  
 Of blood vnkynde born of o kynreede. 5152

## ¶ Explicit liber tercius.

5126. Thoruhout] Thoruh R.

5132. *This stanza and the next are transposed R.*

5135. cruel hastynesse] froward cursednesse B, J, R, P.

5143. foul] om. R. 5148. fel] fals H, R 3, H 5.

## BOOK IV

### ¶ Incipit prohemium libri quarti.

**F**RU<sup>T</sup> of wrytyng set in cronicles olde,  
 Most delectable of fresshnesse in tastyng,  
 And most goodli & glorious to beholde,  
 In cold and heete lengest abidyng,  
 Chaung of cesouns may doon it non hyndryng;  
 And wher-so be that men dyne or faste,  
 The mor men taste, the lenger it wil laste.

The fruit of old  
 wrytyngs remains  
 fresh always;  
 it is harmed by  
 no change of  
 season, and the  
 4 more men taste  
 of it, the longer  
 it lasts.

It doth corages renewe ageyn & glade,  
 Which may be callid frut of the tre of lyff,  
 So parmanable that it wil neuer fade.  
 To the fyue wittis grettest restoratiff,  
 And to ther plesance most cheef confortatiff;  
 For of nature whan thei be quik & goode,  
 Thei of this frut tak ther natural foode.

8 It gives us new  
 heart, as if it  
 were the fruit  
 of the tree of  
 life,

12

Auctours heeron conclude and eek assente,  
 How that wrytyng of his kyndeli riht  
 Doth loud personis & liknessis represente  
 Of freendis absent, seuered fer from siht;  
 Dirknese of absence is clerid with the liht,—  
 Thus frut of wrytyng hath his auauntages,  
 Of folk ferr off to presente the images.

and clears  
 away the dark-  
 16 ness of absence  
 and brings the  
 images of loved  
 ones, who may  
 be far away,  
 near to us.

20

Lawe hadde perished, nadde be wrytyng;  
 Our feith appalled, ner vertu of scripture;  
 For al religioun and ordre of good lyuyng  
 Takth ther exauple be doctryn of lettrure.  
 For wrytyng causeth, with helpe of portraiture,  
 That thynges dirked, of old that wer begonæ,  
 To be remembred with this celestial sonne.

Were it not  
 for wryting, law  
 had perished  
 and our faith  
 24 grown dim and  
 faint.

28

5. non] no H. 10. permanble R, permanable H, R 3.  
 15. conclude herzon H.  
 20. Thus] This H — wrytynges R.  
 22. nadde be] had be H.  
 25. Takth] Tak R.  
 26. portrateur R.

- God ordained writing to offset the dulness of our nature, to illumine the world by eloquence, to assual covenants and make agreements sure. God sette wrytyng & lettres in sentence, Ageyn the dulnesse of our infirmyte, This world tenlumyne be craft of elloquence; Canoun, cyuile, philosophie — these thre 32  
 Confermed fraunchises of many strong cite, Couenautis asselid, trouthis of old assured, Nadde wrytyng been, myht nat haue endurid.
- Diligence, triumphant over sloth, has by its labour brought things long passed into fresh remembrance. Dilligence, cheef triumphatrice 36  
 Of slogardie, necligence & slouthe, Eek of memorye upholdere and norice And registreer to suppowaile trouthe, Hath of old labour (& ellis wer gret routhe) 40  
 Brouhte thynges passid, notable in substaunce, Onli be wrytyng to newe remembrance.
- It is through writing that we know the lives of old patriarchs and prophets and the martyrs who upheld the banner of Christ. Wrytyng is cause that herto is remembrid 44  
 Lyf of prophetis & patriarches olde, How thapostlis and martirs wer dismembrid For Cristis feith, his baner up to holde. 48  
 And wrytyng sheweth, toforn as I you tolde, Of confessours the grete stedfastnesse, And of virgynes the virgynal clennesse.
- The diligence of writers is like a beautiful tree that blossoms and bears fruit every year. Lik to a tre which euery yeer berth frut, [p. 208]  
 Shewyng his beute with blomys & with flours, 52  
 Riht so the foode of our inward reffut, Be dilligence of these olde doctours And daili frut of ther feithful labours Han our corages fostred & pasturid Be wrytyng onli, which hath so longe endurid. 56
- The Epigrams of Prosper, Seneca's Tragedies, the Stratagemys of Vegetius and the Satires of Persius had all vanished, but for writing, that vouchsafes to poets their eternal name. Take record of Virgil, the Mantuan, who, sovereign of his style, wrote of Æneas and Dido. The Epigrames whilom perished hadde 60  
 Of prudent Prosper, that was so vertuous, And of Senec the tragedies sadde, The Stratagemys of Vigecius, 60  
 Rebuk in vicis of noble Percivis, — Yif in olde wrytyng hadde be founde a lak, These said[e] thynges hadde fer be put abak. 64  
 Wrytyng caused poetis to recure A name eternal, the laurer whan thei wan, In adamaunt graue perpetuelli tendure. Record I take of Virgile Mantuan,

29. lettris & wrytyng H.

31. to elumyne R.

39. Registeer H. 51. shewith H.



- That wrot the armys & prowesse of the man 68  
 Callid Eneas, whan he of hih corage  
 Cam to Itail from Dido of Cartage.
- Thre famous bookis this auctour list compile,  
 Eneidoys first; which that dide excell 72  
 In rethorik be souereynte of stile.  
 He drank swich plente, this poete, as men tell,  
 Of the stremys that ran doun fro the well  
 Wrouhte bi tho sustres that be in noumbre nyne, 76  
 Prowesse of knihthod most cleerli to termyne.
- For in that book he cast[e] nat to fail,  
 With vois mellodious for to descryue ariht  
 The grete conquest of Rome & of Itail 80  
 Wrouht bi Enee, the manli Troian kniht.  
 Whos vers notable yif so cleer a liht  
 Thoruh al the world[e], as in rethorik,  
 That among poetis was non onto hym lik. 84
- He wrot also, this poete with his hond  
 Bi humble stile othir bookis tweyne,  
 Oon of pasture, the nexte of tilthe of lond,  
 The vers conveied with feet of metris pleyne. 88  
 Bi which thre labours a palme he dide atteyne,  
 To make his name throuh dites delitable  
 Aboue poetis to be most comendable.
- Wrytng of poetis hath set withynne his cloos 92  
 Conquest of knihthod, ther tryumphes & renouns.  
 Reed of Ouide Methamorphoseos,  
 The grete wondres, the transmutaciouns,  
 The moral menyng, [th]vknouth conclusiouns, 96  
 His book de Ponto, & with gret dilligence  
 Ful many a pistil compleynng for absence.
- Of craft of loue a book he hath compiled,  
 Wheroff Cesar hadde ful gret disdeyn, 100  
 Which was cause that he was exilled  
 Tabide in Ponto, and neuer come ageyn.  
 And yit he dide his labour in certeyn,  
 In hope of grace, his wittis to applie 104  
 To write a book of lous remedie.

and described  
 the conquest of  
 Rome and  
 Italy.  
 80 No poet was  
 his equal.

He also wrote  
 about pastoral  
 life and a Book  
 of Tilt in  
 metrical verse,  
 attaining a palm  
 above all other  
 poets.

Read Ovid's  
 Metamorphoses,  
 his *Epistulae ex  
 Ponto*, his  
*Tristia*, his *Ars  
 amatoria*,  
 because of  
 which Augustus  
 exiled him, his  
*Remedia  
 amoris*.

69. whan he] which H. 72. Eneidos R, Enoydos H.  
 79. vois] wise R. 87. Oon] And R. 90. delectable R.  
 96. thvknouth] vknouth R, J, P, R 3. J omits lines 99-288.  
 102. come] to cum H.

- And remember  
Petraich,  
laureate in  
Rome, and his  
Book of Two  
Fortunes, his  
Eclogues and  
Cosmography,  
his Psalms of  
Repentaunce,  
his Epic of  
Africa, *De Vita  
solitaria* and  
his Book of  
Ignorance, who  
got himself a  
perpetual name  
by his writing.  
Read his Letters  
Without a Title  
and his Book  
of Famous  
Women.
- Wrytyng of old, with lettres aureat,  
Labour of poetis doth hihli magnefie,  
Record on Petrak, in Rome laureat, 108  
Which of too Fortunys wrot the remedie,  
Certeyn Ecoogis and his Cosmographie,  
And a gret conflict, which men may reede & see,  
Of his querellis withynne hymself secrete. 112
- He wrot seuene Psalmys of gret repentaunce,  
And in his Affrik comendid Sciopioun,  
And wrot a book of his ignoraunce  
Bi a maner of excusacioun, 116  
And sette a notable compilacioun  
Vpon the lyff[e] callid solitarye,  
To which this world is froward and contrarie.
- And thus be wrytyng he gat hymself a name 120  
Perpetuelli to been in remembraunce,  
Set and registred in the Hous of Fame,  
And made Epistles of ful hih substaunce  
Callid Sine Titulo; & mor hymself tauaunce, 124  
Of famous women he wrot the excellence,  
Gresilde preferring for hir gret pacience.
- It is also  
remembered in  
writing how  
Troy was  
destroyed, the  
slaughter of  
Hector and  
Homer's ex-  
clusive praise of  
Achilles, who  
wrought all by  
fraud.
- Wrytyng also remembrid hath how Troye 128  
Destroied was, sith[en] go many a yeer,  
The slauhtre of Ector, cheef piler of ther ioie.  
And for the parti of Grekis wrot Omer,  
Which in his wrytyng was particuleer;  
For Tachille, that wrouhte al be fraude, 132  
Aboue Ector he gaf a synguler laude.
- Writing makes  
green the  
chaplets of  
Æsop and  
Juvenal, and on  
Dante it bestows  
celestial fame.
- Wrytyng causeth the chaplet to be greene [p. 209]  
Bothe of Esope and of Iuuenal;  
Dantis labour it doth also meyneteene 136  
Bi a report verray celestial,  
Sunge among Lumbardis in especial,  
Whos thre bookis the grete wondres tell  
Of heuene aboue, of purgatorie & hell. 140
- Through writing  
men learn of  
the miracles and  
holiness of the  
blessed saints,  
of medicines and  
salves and  
staunches for  
mortal wounds.
- Men be wrytyng knowe the meracles  
Of blissid seyntes & of ther hoolynesse,  
Medecyne[s], salue & eek obstacles  
Geyn mortal woundis and eueri gret seeknesse, 144  
Recreacioun and solace in distresse,

113. Psalmys] palmys R. 114. his] om. R.

132. Tachille] to Achilles H, tachilles R 3, P.

140. hell] of hell H. 144. Geyn] ageyne H.

Quiete in labour, in pouert pacience,  
And in richesse riht, trouthe and conscience.

¶ Shortnesse of lyff and foryetilnesse,  
The wit of man dul & ay slidyng,  
Negligence and froward idilnesse, —  
Echon stepmooder to science and konnyng,  
That I dar sey[e]n, nadde be writyng  
Onli ordeyned for our auantages,  
Ded wer memorie & mynde of passid ages.

And thus in cheef thes causes affor told  
Meued the herte of Bochas to writyng,  
And to remembre be many story old  
Thestat of pryncis, in chaires hih sittyng,  
And for vices ther vnwar fallyng,  
Yuyng exauple, as I afferme dar,  
Of fals Fortune how thei shal be war.

His firste thre bookis be ful cleer merours,  
Fulli acomplished, as Bochas vndirtook,  
The cause of fallyng of many conquerours,  
Onli for trouthe and vertu thei forsook.  
For which myn auctour toward his fourte book  
Gan sharpe his penne, to his eternal fame,  
Onli be writyng to geten hym a name.

Myn auctour Bochas, that so moche koude,  
Begynneth heer to make a processe  
Ageyn thoutrage of pryncis that wer proude,  
Which wer brouht lowe for ther frowardnesse,  
And notabli remembreth how\* meeknesse,  
Which stondest hool in oon & doth contune,  
Is ay fraunchised fro daunger of Fortune.

But he in maner doth recapitle ageyn  
The fal of many that sat on hih[e] stages,  
How thei for vicis stood ay in noun certeyn,  
Cam to myscheef for ther gret outrages.

148 Shortness of  
life and lack  
of memory,  
negligence and  
idleness, would  
have destroyed  
the mind of past  
ages, had it not  
152 been for writing.

For these  
reasons Bochas  
156 was moved to  
tell the tale of  
princes, who  
sat on high  
thrones and  
fell because  
of their vices.  
160

His first three  
books com-  
pleted, he  
sharpened his  
164 pen

168  
and began  
a processe  
against the  
outrages of  
proud princes,  
who were  
172 brought low  
for their  
perversity.

176 He recapitu-  
lated the fall of  
Priam, who  
sustained  
adultery,

148. H has large initial.

151. Echon] om. H.

153. auantage H. 154. Age H.

155. cheef] myscheef (but mys crossed out) B — thes] ther R  
— to fore R.

158. chaires R, chaires H.

162. be] bi R. 169. moche gode koude R.

170. Begynnyng R. 173. how] the B.

176. recapitle] a Chapitle H.

- Remembryng first of Priam the damages, 180  
 And how he loste sceptre and regalie  
 For sustenyng of fals auoutrye.
- and of Astyages, who married his daughter to Cambyses, a man of low birth, The fal rehersyng of Astriages, 184  
 That gaf his douhtir whilom in mariage  
 To oon that was Icallid Cambises,  
 A poore man bor[e]n of louh lynage,  
 For he shold[e] ha[ue] non auantage 188  
 In no maner, nouthur in riht nor wrong,  
 Bi rebellioun ageyn hym to be strong.
- so that there should be no male born of his line who could put him from his throne. Yet, after all, Fortune overthrew him. For he tofforn hadde had aveseoun, 192  
 How ther shold oon procedyn of his lyne,  
 Which sholde hym putte out of his regeoun  
 And cause hym in myscheef for to fyne.  
 But yit Fortune koude hym vndermyne,  
 That al his wisdam stood in non auail;  
 For ageyn God preuailleth no counsail. 196
- I need not tell his story here, or the story of Cyrus or King Tarquin. It needeth nat his story to reherse, 200  
 Nor the maner of his vnhappi chaunce,  
 Nor the fallyng of Cirus kyng of Perse,  
 Nor of kyng Tarquyn for his mys gouernaunce,  
 Thouh Bochas heer put hem in remembraunce.  
 For as me semeth, it wer a thyng in veyn,  
 Thyng onys told to telle it newe ageyn.
- Nor did Bochas again rehearse the tale of Artaxerxes. It has already been told, and Bochas begins here with Marcus Manlius. And he list nat now to be rek[e]les, 204  
 Newe ageyn to make rehersaile  
 Of the kyng callid Artaxerxes;  
 Sithe it is told, what sholde it mor auaille?  
 But he procedith streiht onto Itaille 208  
 To telle ther stories, and begynneth heer  
 At Marchus Manlius, a Romeyn consuleer.

¶ *Finis Prologi.*

181. loste] lefft H.

183. fal] fals H.

185. callid R.

190. a vision R, P, a visioun H, avision R 3, avycioun H 5 — had] om. R.

202. as] om. H.

208. onto] in to H.

210. At] Of H — Marcus Manlius H, Mallius R.

## ¶ Incipit liber quartus.

[Howe marchus manlius wrought and dyd for Rome  
toun/ And at the laste he was by the comons  
caste into\* Tibre and there drowned.]<sup>1</sup>

**W**HILOM in Rome ther was a gret lynage [p.211] The Manlius  
Callid Manliois, of renommed noblesse, 212 gens was  
And of that stok, riht fair in his yong age, celebrated in  
Cam this Marchus, his stori berth witnesse. Rome, and  
Which bi processe for his worthnesse Marcus, thrice  
Was thre tymes be iust eleccioun 216 consul, was one  
Maad consuleer of that worthi toun. of its  
descendants.

Which to the comoun ful gretli dide auaille, He often fought  
He dyuers times for the toun[e]s riht for the town,  
Fauht in his daies many strong bataile, and after he  
And ay preuailede thoruh his grete myht, had won a rich  
220 arm-ring of gold  
And in the feeld[e] bi a synguler fiht from an enemy  
Outraied his enmy, lik as it is told, in single  
And took from hym a riche bie of gold. 224 combat, he

Torques in Latin, in Inglissh is a bie, was called  
A cercle of gold, which that Marchus wan. Marcus  
Brouht[e] it hom thoruh his cheualrie; Torquatus; for  
228 *Torques* in Latin  
And of torques, he was callid than means a ring.

Marchus Torquatus; & thus the name gan, 232  
He to be callid, the stori tellith vs,  
Among Romeyns Torquatus Manlius.

And he wolde ofte iupartie good & liff, 232  
For the cite entre the feeld allone,  
And ther conquered for a prerogatiff  
Sondri crownes, with many riche stone,  
Wan\* tunicles of gold ful many one; 236  
For thilke tyme, for dyuers hih emprises  
Wer crownis maad in many sondri wises.

212. Malliois R, Manlyoys H, Manlioys R 3, P.  
214. Marcus H, P — his] þe H. 218. ful] om. H.  
222. fiht] siht R.  
229. began R.  
230. vs] thus H.  
231. Mallius R.  
235. many a H.  
236. Wan] Whan B, R — ful] om. H, R 3, P.

<sup>1</sup> Supplied from Pr, n. 6 recto (below cut and Incipit). For into read nito.

and, as Aulus Gellius says, were given to men who, after they had fought and risked their lives for the town, were called champions.

There were Triumphal, Obsidional, Mural, and Naval crowns, and a crown called Castrence.

Triumphal crowns were given to emperors and mighty conquerors.

Obsidional crowns were wrought like grain or corn and presented to those who relieved besieged cities.

The Mural crown of laurel was granted to him who first ascended the wall of an assaulted stronghold,

and Naval crowns, carved like rudders, were ordained for those who first entered the ship of an enemy.

For as Agellius maketh mencion,  
Ther wer in Rome deuised straunge crowns 240  
For such as hadden fouhten for the toun,  
And\* for ther labour reseceyued ther guerdouns,  
Bi a prerogatiff callid champiouns,  
Which sondry tymes of manhood & of myht 244  
Iuparted ther lyff\* for the toun[e]s riht.

Lik ther desertis thes croun[e]s took ther names;  
For summe of them wer callid Tryumphal,  
Youe onto knihtes for ther noble fames. 248  
Othir also callid Obsidional  
In Romeyn tunge; & summe ther wer Mural, —  
Eek other tweyne, Naual and Castrence,  
And alle thei wern of ful gret excellence. 252

The Tryumphal makid wer of gold,  
Offred in tryumphes to worthi emperours,  
Set with saphirs and rubies manyfold  
Vpon the hedis of myhti conquerours. 256  
And whan that Rome was shynyng in his flours,  
That crowne callid, with braunchis boornid faire,  
In ther vulgar Thaurat Coronaire.

Thobsydyonal, of which I spak tofforn, 260  
Deuised wern, the book doth specesie,  
Croun[e]s notable wrouht lik greyn or corn,  
Youe onto princis which thoruh ther cheualrie  
Reskewed seeges and saued the partie 264  
Of hem that wer[e] closed streiht withynne,  
Thoruh hih prowesse a crowne for to wynne.

Another crowne, that callid was Mural,  
Was youe and grauntid bi the emperour 268  
To hym that firste wan vpon the wal  
At any seege, and ther abood the shour  
Fihtyng allone, in hope of sum socour.  
And he that myht[e] such a brunt susteene, 272  
Sholde of laurer were a crowne greene.

Naual crownes whilom wer ordeyned  
For them that fauht[e] manli on the se,  
Whan ther shippis wer togidre cheyned, — 276  
He that of manhod & marcial surete  
Vpon his enmyes made first entre

239. Aulus Gellius P. 242. And] As B — labours R.  
243. callid] maade R. 245. lyff] lyues B. 246. thes] þe H.  
252. excellence] reverence H, R 3. 253. The] This R.

- Resceyue sholde, in al the peeplis siht,  
Korue lich a rother, a crowne cleer & briht. 280
- The nexte crowne, which callid is\* Castrence,  
Was youe of custum to that manli kniht  
That list auauunce hym thoruh his magnificence,  
Hostes assemblede, iuparte wolde of myht 284  
Tofforn al other [t]entren into fiht,  
Sholde eek resseyue, his noblesse for to queeme,  
A sterriid crowne maad lik a diadeeme.
- The crowne also which callid was Oual 288  
Took first name of ioie and gladnesse,  
Which kynges, princis in actis marcial  
Vsid somtyme in ther ioious noblesse  
At sodeyn skarmysshes of casuel hastynesse, 292  
As whan thei venquysshed proudli in bataille  
Such as ther hihnesse vnwarli wolde assaille.
- And for thei wern of poweer invyncible, [p. 212]  
Ther noble crownis coriousli wer wrouht 296  
Of mirtis branchis, which been inputrible,  
Enduryng euere and corupte nouht.  
For this woord Oual, yif it be weel souht,  
Is seid of gladnesse, as put is in memorie, 300  
Ordeyned for pryncis after ther victorie.
- Anothir crowne callid Cyuyca,  
Of oken bowes was maad[e] round & pleyn,  
Ordeyned for them which *pro Re Publica*  
Koude in bataile reskewe a citeseyn 304  
And slen his-enmy that was a foreyn.  
Of myhti ok he sholde for manheed  
Cleyme to were a crowne upon his hed. 308
- And lik as knihtis in marcial delites,  
For comoun proffit dede hemsilf auauunce,  
So for ther noble victorious merites  
The Romeyn peepple hadde a gret plesance, 312  
With sundri crownis marcial in substaunce,

The starred  
crown called  
Castrence was  
received by  
that knight who  
entered into  
battle before all  
other men,

and the Oval  
crown by the  
victor in a  
sudden  
skirmish.

It was wrought  
of myrtle  
branches, which  
never corrupt.

The Civic  
crown, made  
of oak boughs,  
was the reward  
for rescuing a  
citizen in battle  
and slaying his  
enemy.

As Aulus  
Gellius records,  
the Romans  
took great  
pleasure in thus  
rewarding their  
famous knights.

281. is callid B, R.

285. tentren] entren R.

291. ther] the R.

296. wer] was R.

297. mirtis] Marcus H, Martys H 5, mirthis R 3 — inputrible  
J, R, H, P.

308. a] bat H.

312. Romeyn peepple] Romayns H.

- For to guerdone ther knihtis most famous,  
Myn auctour record callid Agellius.
- Marcus Manlius  
often risked his  
life, and won  
many crowns,  
Among other that dede ther besi peyne 316  
Such[e] crownis manli to recure,  
Marcus Manlius, in manhod souereyne,  
Put ofte his lyff in mortal auenture;  
For in his force so moche he dide assure, 320  
That he deserued ful yore agon  
Of these said crownes many mo than oon.
- and was given  
the surname  
Capitolinus  
And to [the] encres of his noble fame  
He dede a thyng bothe manli & dyuyne, 324  
Wherbi that he gat hym a surname  
To be callid Marchus Capitolyne,  
Which aboue alle his namis dide shyne, —  
Whan he allone, wherbi he is comendid, 328  
The Capitoile from enmyes hath defendid.
- at the time  
that the  
French captured  
the city and  
tried to take  
the Capitol  
Whan thei of Fraunce hadde taken the cite,  
Put al Rome at myscheef onto fliht,  
And leid await[e] with a gret meyne 332  
The Capitoile for to take at niht,  
Bi a passage that lay ferr out of siht  
Vnder a roche callid Carmentoun,  
Ther tau e entred into the cheef dongoun. 336
- by climbing  
along a dark  
valley at mid-  
night and  
scaling the wall  
in a surprise  
attack.  
Thei wer ther shrowdid vndir a dirk[e] vale,  
With ordynaunce and myhti violence  
Toward mydnyht the wal[l]e for to scale, 340  
Most couertli them keepyng in scilence;  
Dempte pleynli, for lak\* of resistence,  
That thei sholde, maugre tho withyne,  
Ther hour assigned, the Capitoile wynne.
- But the brave  
geese beat their  
wings and made  
such a com-  
motion that  
Marcus awoke,  
But the ges that wer wit[h]lynnæ cloos, 344  
The waker foules be noise of ther komyng  
Gan bete ther weenges, & up anon aros,  
Wherthoruh this Marcus in his bed liggyn  
Gan tabraide, & made no tarieng, 348  
Took his harneis, most furious & wroth,  
And to the wallis in al haste he goth.

315. A. Gellius P.

318. Mallius R.

325. that] *om.* H — gat] gaff R.333. to] *om.* R.

337. Thei] Ther R. 341. lak] lakkyng B, J.

343. the] ther H. 346. aros] thei aros R.



- And hym that cam first upon the wall,  
Of verry force, withoute mor tarieng,  
Doun into Tibre he made hem haue a fall;  
And all his felawes bisi in scalyng,  
With sheeld or pauys, or ladderes up reisyng,  
This manli Mark, shortli to comprehende,  
Into the flood he made hem to descende.
- Vnto the deth, of hym thei wer abauyd;  
For bi his kniethod & his hih renoun,  
Maugre them, the Capitoile sauid  
And aftirward rescued al the toun.  
[And] for the fortune, in conclusioun,  
Which that tyme dide vnto hym fall,  
Capitolinus men dede hym aftir call.
- And for he was so victorious,  
Hymself allone be this hih victorie,  
This name he gat to hym & al his hous,  
Perpetueli to been in memorye  
And registred in the consistorie,  
In ther cronicles his name determyned,  
With goldene lettres to been enlumyned.
- And the gees, of whom I spak also,  
That so weel kepte wach upon the niht,  
Itake wern and offired to luno  
Solempneli with gret[e] torchis liht,  
To whom also it grauntid was of riht,  
Whan a famyne maad her stoor to faile,  
Thei spared wern & take for no vitaile.
- And thus was Marcus lik a\* conquerour  
Worsheped in Rome, alle beyng of assent.  
But whan summe folk be set in gret honour,  
Sumtyme it happeth thei holde hem nat content,  
With couetise ther hertis be so blent,  
Fro suffisaunce, aboue ther degrees  
To surmounte to hier dignites.
- This Manlius was fret in his corage  
To gretter worshepis sodenli tascende,  
Deemyng so to haue had auantage,
- and, rushing to the wall, threw the enemy one after another into the Tiber.
- They were cast down by him to their death, and thus the Capitol was saved.
- For this deed the name Capitolinus was given to him and his family in perpetuity.
- And the geese were made sacred to Juno and never eaten in time of famine.
- Marcus received all the worship of a conqueror; but, like many other men set in high honour, he was not content,
- but wanted to transcend his equals,
- 352
- 356
- 360
- 364
- 368
- 372
- 376
- [p. 213] 380
- 384
- 388
353. hem] hym H. 362. And] om. R. 374. to] onto R.  
379. Marcus lik a] Mark a mihti B, R, J, Marc lik a H, R 3, P,  
H 5.  
383. so be H.

- And in hymself gan frowardli pretende  
 In that cite al othir to transcende,  
 Beside tryumphes, which wer to hym reserued,  
 Hiere to clymbe than he hath disserued. 392
- and became  
 jealous of a  
 lord named  
 Camillus, the  
 greatest man in  
 Rome, governor  
 of the city,  
 But ther was oon, as maad is menciou[n],  
 Callid Camyllus, a lord of gret substaunce,  
 Which in the cite & in that myhti tou[n]  
 Aboue al othir hadde gouernaunce. 396  
 And as it is Iput in remembraunce,  
 To his gretnesse non othir myht atteyne,  
 At whos noblesse Marchus gan disdeyne.
- and rebelled  
 against him.  
 In his herte he hadde a gret envie,  
 Which caused hym bi outrage for to erre  
 Ageyn Camyllus, which for his cheualrie  
 The tou[n] gouerned bothe in pes and werre.  
 And for Marchus wolde hymself preferre 400  
 Aboue that pry[n]ce in worshepe and honour,  
 First of the peeple he gat hym gret fauour. 404
- And as he was  
 popular he drew  
 many of the  
 people to his  
 side  
 And bi a maner of conspiracie  
 He gadred hertis of the comounte,  
 And drouh also onto his partie 408  
 Gret multitude thoruhout the cite.  
 And thus roos first the dreedful enmyte  
 Withynne Rome, the story tellith thus, 412  
 Atween these pry[n]cis, Camyll & Manlius.
- and caused  
 great dissention.  
 Thus first the venym atween hem two was sowe  
 Of hasti hatreede bi fals occasiouns,  
 Which in the cite atween hih & lowe 416  
 Caused of newe dyuers discenciouns,  
 Aftir the[r] vnkouth straunge oppynyons;  
 For eueri wiht drouh to his partie,  
 As thei wer meued in ther fantasie. 420
- To put a stop  
 to the strife a  
 dictator named  
 Cornelius Cassius  
 came from  
 Tuscany and  
 put Marcus in  
 gaol,  
 But for to stynte this outrageous errour  
 And thes hasti stryues furious,  
 Ageyn fro Tuscan kam a dictatour,  
 That tyme callid Cornelius Cassus, 424  
 Which of wisdam blamed Manlius;

395. Which] *with* in R — that] *be* H.396. hadde] *om.* R. 397. Iput] *put* R.398. non othir] *nomayn* R.410. thoruhout] *thoruh* R.418. ther vnkouth straunge] *ther straunge vncouth* H.

For he caused such rumour in the town,  
And for his guilt comaunded hym to prisoun.

Which was in maner hyndryng to his name,  
And appalled in parti his noblesse;  
For a tyme gan teclipse his fame,  
But aftirward the cloude of that derknesse  
Bi comoun fauour was turned to cleernesse:  
For as it hadde be riht for the nonys,  
In his diffence the comouns roos attonis.

428 which for  
a time eclipsed  
his fame; but  
the commons  
soon rose in his  
defence,

432

First whan thei hadde among ther gret rumours,  
Mid of ther fell [&] hatful contencioun  
Shortli rebuked the worthi senatours,  
Because Marcus was sette in prisoun,  
Which hadde been so helplich to the town.  
Whom to delyuere thei dyuers menys souhte,  
And, as I fynde, euene thus thei wrouhte:

436 rebuking the  
Senate because  
it had allowed  
him to be so  
humiliated,

440

First thei cladde hem in moornyng clothes blake,  
Pale of ther facis, pitousli weepying,  
Ther berd vnshaue, ther her to-reende & shake,  
Lik furious men up and doum rennyng  
Tofor the prisoun, al the niht wakyng.  
And on his harmes pleyntli to be wreke,  
Thei gan manace the prisoun for to breke.

444 and, dressing  
themselves in  
black, set up  
such a wailing  
and tumult  
before the  
prison,

448

And for to stynte ther outraious clamour  
The senatour[e]s made anon ordeyne  
To delyuere hym out of his soiour,  
Losne his feteres and to breke his cheyne.  
And whan he was delyuered out of peyne,  
His list nat stynte, of hasti cruelte  
Of proude corage auengid for to be.

452 that the  
Senators  
ordered  
Marcus to be  
freed.  
But no sooner  
was he released  
than he wanted  
to be revenged,

And in his furious fel presumpcioun,  
Maugre the senat and tribunys euerichon,  
Saide he wolde gouerne Rome town.  
At whos outrage thei gan disdeyne anon;  
The peeplis hertis from hym wer agon,  
And for his pride thei bauisement  
Assigned hym to come to iugement.

456 and presump-  
tuously said  
that he would  
govern Rome  
himself. This  
lost him his  
popularity,

460

Forsake he was thoruhout the cite,  
Ther cam nat oon with hym of his kynreede,  
He fond non helpe in his aduersite,

[p. 214] and, forsaken by  
the commons,  
464 he was brought  
to judgment.

Sauff a fewe cam with hym in deede  
Of the comouns, ful feeble at such a neede.  
And thus, alas, he fond no resistance 468  
Was vailable onto his diffence.

Knowing no  
other help, he  
took off his  
clothes and  
shewed the  
wounds he had  
received in  
defending the  
city

But for socour constreyned and in dreede,  
Awey he putte his clothyng & vesture,  
And naked stood[e], veraili in deede, 472  
Shewyng his woundis, which he dede endure  
At many scarmyssh and disconfiture.  
And for reskus, to speke in woordes fewe,  
The Capitoile to them he dide shewe. 476

and cried in a  
loud voice to his  
gods for aid.  
At this the  
people began to  
weep, and the  
judges were so  
put out of  
countenance  
that,

And in supportyng eek of his quarell,  
Meeuyng the peple to rewe on his compleynt,  
First to his goddis loude he dide appell 480  
To preserue hym of that he was atteynt.  
The peple aboute hym with teris al bespreynt,  
That the iuges astoned wer in deede,  
Wher-as thei sat ageyn hym to procede.

fearing another  
rebellion, they  
had him led out  
secretly and  
thrown from the  
Capitol into the  
Tiber.

But secreli he was lad out of pres 484  
To a place callid Frowmentyne,  
And ther, alas, thei wer [so] merciles  
His doom bi rigour fulli to termyne,  
Spared nouter noblesse nor lyne: 488  
Fro the Capitoile, out of the cheef donioun,  
Lowe into Tibre for to be cast doun.

No man can  
describe by  
wryting the  
insecurity of  
those who labor  
for any  
community.

This was his eende, void of al fauour,  
Which no man wolde redressen nor amende, 492  
Bi cruelte cast out of that tour,  
Which he whilom most knihtli gan diffende.  
But what man can be wrytyng comprehende  
Thunseur socour founde in necessite 496  
To them that labour for any comounte?

Let proud men  
who trust in  
worldly things  
consider the  
fate of Marcus.

Lat men beholde, that truste on worldli thynges,  
And namli them that be proude and hauteyn,  
Opne ther eyen, cast up ther lookynges 500  
To considre & see weel in certeyn,

475. reskew H.

479. loude] low R. 86. so] om. 4J, R.

488. nor] ne H. 490. a doun H.

498. on] & R.

499. them] thay H, thei R 3, they P — a horizontal line is drawn  
over the u in hauteyn, B.

500. Opne] Opon R.

Who trusteth Fortune, his truste is but in veyn!  
 And yif ye list a cleer exauple fynde,  
 Among remembreth on Marcus in your mynde. 504

What myhte auaille his noblesse in bataile?  
 Bies of gold, crownes of laureer?  
 His riche platis or his vnkouth maile,  
 His myhti sheeldis, that shon so briht & cleer? 508  
 Or his tryumphes, songe ferr & neer,  
 Or his victories for the cite wrouht? —  
 In his gret myscheeff auailed hym riht nouht.

What did his  
 prowess, his  
 crowns of gold  
 and laurel,  
 his strong  
 armour and  
 triumphs avail?

[Here Bochas writeth in part ayenst/ suche as  
 cannot be content with suffisaunce/ but vsurpe  
 to hihe dignitees.]<sup>1</sup>

**H**EEER Iohn Bochas callith to memorye 512  
 The straunge salaire [and] þe famous guerdoun  
 Of them þat gat bi conquest & victorye  
 Honour of tryumphe withynne Rome toun;  
 How it was vsid, he maketh mencionn, 516  
 Ceriousli reherseth the manere,  
 Which I shal write, yif ye list to heere.

Here John  
 Bochas tells of  
 the rewards  
 received by  
 those who won  
 victories for  
 Rome.

Auis was take first of estatis thre:  
 Of men of armys, which that wer present, 520  
 That sauh in deede the magnanymye  
 Of hym that shal haue it be iugement;  
 Of the clergie thei muste haue eek assent,  
 And of the senat and peeple most notable, 524  
 Be preef souht out that he wer founde able.

A triumph was  
 granted with  
 the assent of  
 the three  
 estates,

This prynce also, outhere the capteyn,  
 Which shal the tryumphe resceyue of verray riht,  
 Withyne a chaar, ful richeli beseyn 528  
 He shal be set, of gold bornid briht,  
 Fret with stonis, which shal yiue a liht

and the  
 triumphator  
 rode through  
 the city in a  
 chariot of gold  
 adorned with  
 gems

506. laureer] Laureate H.

509 &] or H.

511. mischeffs R — *In inner margins*: "Hic deficit rubrica"  
 R, "deficit Rubrica" B.

513. salary H — and] om. R, J, P.

523. the] ther R.

525. preef] trowth H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 87 recto.

- As Phebus doth in his midday speere,  
That no dirknesse aboute hym shal appeere. 532
- drawn by  
four white  
horses.  
This heuenli chaar shal for mor delit,  
To shewe thencre of his knihtli glorie,  
Be lad and drawe with foure steedis whiht  
Thoruh the cite in tokne of his victorie. 536  
And he shal han, for a synguler memorye,  
In his riht hand a palme of gold ful sheene,  
And on his hed a crowne of laureer greene.
- He bore a palm  
of gold in his  
right hand and  
was crowned  
with laured.  
Over his  
armour he wore  
a garment of  
purple powdered  
with palma, and  
in his left hand  
he held a  
crimson standard  
decorated with  
the arms of his  
prince. He was  
escorted to the  
Capitol like a  
conqueror,  
He shal eek haue aboute al his armure, [p. 215] 540  
Poudrid with palmys a cote of purpil red,  
In his left hand, his quarellis for tassure,  
A standard round declaryng his manhed,  
And al aboute set upon the hed 544  
The pryncis armys, ful riche of appaillle,  
In whos quarell he accomplisshed the\* bataille.  
And of custum the said[e] standard shall  
Be richeli depeynt with red colour. 548  
And so this kniht, this man most marciall,  
Shal be conveied lik a conquerour.  
And yit for mor encre of his honour,  
Vpon ther feet his prisoneres echon, 552  
Take bi his manhod, aboute his chaar shal gon,  
The moste worthi faste bi his side,  
Al the remnant aftir on hym lokyng.  
Echon the poetes which in the touz abide 556  
Shal on hym waite at his hom komyng,  
Dites deuse and of his conquest syng;  
And streeng menstrallis, to bern also record,  
Ther instrumentis shal touchyn of accord, 560  
Alle of entent to yiuue hym mor corage.  
To the Capitoile so he shal be brouht,  
And list of pride he falle in non outrage,  
Nor surquedie withynne his owne thouht, 564  
The moste wrech shal of the touz be souht,  
Which of custum shal haue a staf in\* honde,  
And in the chaar behynde his bak up stonde.
- his prisoners  
going on foot at  
his side, and  
was attended  
by musicians  
and poets who  
sang his praise.
- But to abate  
his pride  
the most  
miserable wretch  
in all  
Rome stood  
behind him,

545. of] in H.

546. the] in B, R, J.

556. 1st the] of R, of the J, P.

559. bern] been R.

560. of] at R.

566. in] on B, R, J, P

- Gnotos Eolitos* in Greek he sholde seyn,  
 Which in our tunge pleynli doth expresse,  
 "Knewe thi-silff," remembryng in certeyn  
 Vpon Fortunys froward doublinesse,  
 On whom to triste may be no sekirnesse.  
 And who that douteth wher that it be thus,  
 Lat hym remembre the eende of Manlius.
- What auailed his triumphes or his bies?  
 Crownys of gold & perlid fressh tunycles?  
 His hih prowesse, or al his cheualries,  
 Synguler fihytyng or marcial particules,  
 Newli remembred or rad in old cronicles?  
 Peise his merites, & see how at the laste,  
 How into Tibre ther champioun thei caste!
- To his excus auailed neueradeel  
 Fauour of comouns, carectes of his woundis,  
 Nor to the goddis his lamentable appel,  
 Nor remembraunce of ther fraunchised boundis,  
 Teritories, nor wynyng of the groundis,  
 Which that he wan with spendyng of his blood, —  
 Al knet in on, to hym no sted thei stood.
- Heer may ye see how Fortune sodenli  
 Cleernesse of fame can chaunge to dirknesse,  
 Glorie\* to reproche, worshepe to velany,  
 And ioie passid to mortal heuynesse,  
 Swetnesse of sauour\* into bittirnesse,  
 And sobirnesse into furious rage,  
 And old fraunchise to thraldam & seruage.
- For ther was nouthter request nor prairer  
 That auailed to his delyueraunce.  
 In cheynys fetrid, dedli of look & cheer,  
 Abod the sentence of his fynal greuaunce, —  
 Pale of face, with tremblyng contenaunce,  
 Whan he, alas, gan mortalli aproche  
 Of Tarpeia to the hidous roche.

568 saying, "Know thyself and remember the doubleness of Fortune, in whom there is no trust."

572

576 For what auailed the triumphs of Marcus?

580

584 He was thrown into the Tiber, and the favour of the commons, his appeal to the gods, and the remembrance of his past services were as nothing.

588

592 Thus can Fortune suddenly change the brightness of fame to darkness, and glory to reproach.

596 Fettered in chains, he awaited his sentence, and was led pale and trembling to the Tarpeian Rock.

600

568. Gnothy seanton P — sholde] shal H, R 3.

573. douteth] douth R.

576. &] or H, R 3, H 5, P.

577. prowesse] prowe R.

578. particles R, J, P, particlis H, R 3, particules H 5.

579. new H. 589. may ye] men may H. 591. Gloire B, J, R.

593. sauour] fauour B, H, R, R 3, H 5.

594. forious R.

595. hraldam R.

This rock was named after a lady called Tarpeia, who, guilty of treason, was buried under it.

Of Tarpeia this roche bar the name  
 Aftir a ladi, as maad is mencioun, 604  
 Callid Tarpeia, which fill in gret diffame  
 Because she was assentid to tresoun,  
 Taue brouht enmyes into Rome touen,  
 Wherof convict, hir stori is weel knowe, 608  
 Vnder that roche she was Idolue lowe.

And it was also called Carmenton, after Carmentis, a woman of great influence, who built the Capitol and invented our alphabet.

This roche also was callid Carmentoun  
 Aftir a woman of gret auctorite  
 Callid Carmentis, which thoruh hir hih renoun 612  
 The Capitoile made in that cite.  
 And she fond lettres first of our A. B. C.,  
 And kunyng hadde, among hir werkes all,  
 Declare afforn[e] thyng that sholde befall. 616

Marcus found neither favour nor friendship.

And on this harde sturdi roche of ston,  
 Fro the Capitoile Marcus was cast doun.  
 Othir fauour nor frenshepe fond he non,  
 For alle his batailes fouhten for the touen. 620  
 The comouns hertis wer turnid up-so-doun,  
 Whos loue is lik, preued at assay,  
 A blase of fyr, now briht & now away. 623

The common people may make promises, but when the need comes they do not keep them,

The comoun people may hote and crie faste, [p. 216]  
 As ther hertis stedfast were & stable;  
 But at a neede ther promys wil nat laste,  
 Of ther corages thei be so remeuable.\*  
 To folwe resoun gerissch and vntretable, 628  
 Lihtli declynyng, and that is ful gret routhe,  
 Aftir oppynyouns, & nothyng aftir trouthe.

and so Marcus was deceived and left to his fate.

This Manlius was of his trust deceyued,  
 Whos lust vnleeful departed was on tweyne, 632  
 First whan of pride he wolde ha be rseyne  
 To hih estat, which he myht nat atteyne,  
 Wherthoruh the senat gan at hym disdeyne,  
 And the comouns, ay fals at such a neede, 636  
 Lafft hym in myscheeff, & took of hym non heede.

609. Idolue lowe] I don throwe H.

616. fall H.

627. remeuable] remuable B.

631. This] Thus H.



¶ *Lenvoye.*

**I**N this tragedie men may beholde & see  
 The pereilous damages of fals ambicioun,  
 Of them that benat content *witb per* degre,  
 But wolde up clymbe, lik ther oppynyoun,  
 To hih estat be vsurpacioun, —  
 Which nat conside the sentence of scripture,  
 In a good mene men lengest may endure.

Who that vsurpeth to hier dignite  
 Than apperteneth to hier condicioun,  
 In roial chaires for to make his see,  
 And hath no tite of lyne nor resoun,  
 Thoruh froward pride ful ofte he is put down;  
 For lak he seethnat how eueri creature  
 In a good mene lengest may endure.

Whan Dedalus tauhte his sone [to] flee,  
 He bad hym first, of hih discreisioun,  
 Fro Phebus heete keepe his wynges fre,  
 And fro Neptunvs cold congellacioun,  
 Menyng herbi, for short conclusioun,  
 That who that list with ioie his staat assure,  
 In a good mene he lengest shal endure.

Remembre the manhod & magnanymyte  
 Of Marcus Manlius, which be presumpcioun  
 Wolde haue gouerned Rome the cite,  
 Maugre the senat reulid that myhti toun,  
 Which turnid aftir to his confusioun,  
 For he sauh nat, such was his auenture,  
 In a good mene men lengest may endure.

Sume in ther grettest hih prosperite,  
 Of froward corage and furious mocioun,  
 In ther gret wele, bi fals duplicite  
 Han a maner straunge condicioun,  
 Nat to be content with plente nor foisoun,  
 Bi a fals etik, which of ther nature  
 In a good mene ne cannot long endure.

But in this erthe grettest felicite  
 Is hertis ese, richest pocioun,

This tragedy  
 tells us of the  
 peril that lies  
 in the false  
 640 ambition of  
 those who, not  
 contented with  
 their degre,  
 wish to climb  
 to higher estate  
 by usurpation.

644  
 Such people  
 are often put  
 down; they  
 cannot see that  
 all creatures  
 best endure  
 648 when they live  
 in a happy  
 mean.

652  
 Dedalus told  
 his son to fly  
 neither too high  
 nor too low,

656

660  
 but Marcus  
 Manlius,  
 content with no  
 moderation,

664

668  
 was like  
 many others  
 who in their  
 highest  
 prosperity are  
 most  
 dissatisfied.

672

Heart's ease  
 is the greatest  
 joy on earth,

652. to] *om.* R, J, H, R 3.

659. &] & the R.

674. richesse H.

With suffisaunce content for to be,  
Of worldli trouble teschewe thoccasioun, 676  
Meuyng no quarellis, causyng no discencioun,  
Nor cleyne nothyng which hard is to recure,  
Sithe in good mene men lengest may endure.

and this,  
Princes, you  
should re-  
member; for  
the envy of  
high climbing  
causes only  
strife, and no  
community is  
to be trusted.

Pryncis, remembreth in your most mageste, 680  
Envie of clymbyng causith diuisioun.

Beth of accord, trustith\* no comounte,  
Which, at a poynt, is but decepcioun,  
And specialli fleeth symulacioun. 684

Ye may in Marcus seen a pleyn figure,  
Which for ambicioun myhte no while endure.

[How Neptanabus kyng of Egipt / was by xeres  
constreynd to fle his kyngdam.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas next  
began to tell  
briefly the story  
of Nectanebes,  
king of Egypt,

**A**FFTIR the fall of Marcus Manlius,  
Bochas anon gan his stile dresse 688

Breeffi to telle of Neptanabus,  
Kyng of Egipt, and of his gret richesse,  
Seyng afforn[e], in al his noblesse  
Bi vnkouth crafft, how he ne myhte chese, 692  
That in al haste his crowne he sholde lese.

who foresaw by  
astrology that  
he should lose  
his kingdom.

For he was kunnyng in especial,  
And riht expert, as maad is mencioniun,  
In alle the sciences callid liberal, 696

And knew afforn bi calculacioun  
How God wolde make a transmygracioun  
Of his kyngdam, & pleynli to reporte,  
The lond of Perse to Grekis ful transporte. 700

Forced to flee by  
Xerxes, he  
went to Grece  
as a magician

For bi kyng Zereses out of his cuntre,  
Maugre his tresor, his cunyng & his miht,  
This Neptanabus constreynd was to flee,  
Durst nat abide to haue of hym a siht. 704

And into Grece he drouh hym anon riht,  
Nat lik a kyng, but aftir old writyngis,  
Lik a magicien he wrouhte wonder thynges.

677. quarell H — 2nd no] om. H, R 3, H 5, P.

682. trustith] trust on B, R 3, trust in H 5, P.

693. lese] om. R.

704. of hym to have H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 88 recto.

Vpon fortune fether to proceede, [p. 217] 708 and there  
 Bi his kunyng he gretli forthered was, became so  
 And bi his sleihty werkyng eek in deede intimate with  
 He was aqueynted with queen Olympias, Olympias,  
 And so secre, pleynli this the caas, that men said  
 That upon hir, men seide be deemyng, Alexander was  
 Gat Alisaundre, the grete myhti kyng. his son.

712

But how he fledde out of his regioun,  
 Of his images nor his illusiouns  
 716 But Bochas does not tell  
 Bochas mak[e]th no maner menciouñ, about either  
 Nor how he wrouhte be incantaciouns, his sight or  
 Nor of his sotil operaciouns, his incantaciouns,  
 Nor how that he, lik a man, be nihte or how he  
 Whilom appeered in the queenys sihte. appeared like a  
 720 man by night  
 to the queen.

Sauf of his deth[e], Bochas writ riht nouht,  
 Remembryng nouthur the tyme nor the date,  
 How Alisaundre and he\* togidre han souht  
 724 He wrote only  
 The cours of sterris toward eue late, of his death,  
 And how his sone, lik as was his fate, and how  
 Douñ from a bregge bi ful mortal wrak Alexander  
 Cast hym bakward, & so his nekke brak. threw him  
 728 off a bridge and  
 broke his neck.

[How Pausonoy Duk of Lacedemoyne was exiled  
 by them of Athenys.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HIS was his ende, & aftir this Bochas Pausanias, duke  
 Gan in al haste his stile [to] auance of Sparta,  
 Of Pausonyos to tell the pitous caas, 732  
 And al the maner of his woful chaunce.  
 Which was a duk, & hadde in goueraunce  
 Lacedemoyne, ther foundyng a cite  
 Which of old tyme was callid Bisante.  
 Thei of Athenys that cite gat with myht 736 was exiled by  
 And it conquered bi ther cheualrie; the Athenians  
 And aftirward, wher it wer wrong or riht, and ended his  
 Thei exiled the same Pausanye. life in poverty  
 and sorrow.

716. nor] nor of H. 720. nihte] myht R.  
 724. Alisaundre and he] he and Alisaundre B, R, J, P.  
 725. euen R.  
 730. to] om. J, R, H, R 3, H 5, P, tavaunce Add.  
 731. Pausanyos H, R 3, Pausonoy R, J, Pausonyos H 5, Pausa-  
 nias P.  
 736. gat] gret R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 88 recto.

And thus Fortune thoruh hir fals envie 740  
 Caused that duk, withoute mor delaies,  
 In sorwe and pouert for to eende his daies.

[How Heliarchus the tirant for extorcion and oppres-  
 sion, was slayn, by the knight Leonydes.]<sup>1</sup>

Because Heli-  
 archus troubled  
 all Persia with  
 his tyranny,

**A**FFTIR the fal[le] sothli of thes tweyne,  
 John Bochas was meued of corage 744  
 For to reherse with al his bisi peyne  
 The grete furie & thodious rage  
 Of Heliarchus, which bi gret outrage,  
 Though he nat was famous in cheualrie,  
 He noied al Perse with his tirannye. 748

Bochas became  
 angry and  
 resolved to  
 write against  
 tyrants in  
 general,

Wherfor Bochas gan at hym disdeyne,  
 Caste he wolde, onli for his sake,  
 Touche of tirauntes mo than on or tweyne,  
 And bi writyng geyn\* hem a werre make. 752  
 And in his hande he gan a penne take,  
 Tolde in ordre the pereilous pestilence  
 Which thei wrouhte bi mortal violence. 756

declaring  
 that Fortune  
 had good cause  
 to shew her  
 power against  
 them.

First he declareth how Fortune of riht,  
 Ageyn tirantis furious & wood,  
 Hath ful [good] cause for to shewe hir myht,  
 Tappalle ther dignites in which\* thei stood, — 760  
 Such as reioysshe for to sheede blood,  
 Do nat ellis but laboure & deuse  
 To spoille the peple in many sondri wise.

Heliarchus was  
 mortal enemy  
 of a city called  
 Heraclia, and  
 brought the  
 entire country  
 to mischief

And Heliarchus thoruh his cruelte, 764  
 And his contryued fals extorsiouns  
 Was mortal enmy to a fair cite  
 Callid Heraclie, & many othir touns.  
 And bi [his] extort fals oppressiouns, 768  
 As the deede concluded, at a preeff,  
 Al that contre\* he brouhte to myscheeff.

740. hir] his R.

743. falle] fallis H. 745. For] & for H.

753. ageyn B. 759. good] om. J, R, P.

760. which] which that] B, R, J, H 5, P.

760. which] which that] B, R, J, H 5, P.

764. Elearchus P. 767. Heraclie] heliarchie H

770. contre] countee B — to] vn to H, H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 88 recto.

- Turnyng his grace & fauour to hatreede,  
 Merci & pite onto cruelte, 772  
 Fraunchise of peeplis to seruitute & dreede,  
 Oppressid ther fredam & ther old liberte.  
 And all ther statutis, bi which thei wer maad fre,  
 He interrupted of force & nat of riht, 776  
 Which made hym odious in eueri mannys siht.
- But to restreyn his grete extorsious  
 Fortune this while was nat rek[e]les:  
 For his horrible abhominaciouns 780  
 She gan tauale hym, this goddesse merciles,  
 Bi a good kniht callid Leonides,  
 Which with a felawe born of that contre  
 Cast on this tiraunt auengid for to bee. 784
- Thei dempte it was an almesse dede,  
 To sette ther lond in quiete & in ese,  
 Of a tirant the furious blood to sheede,  
 His inportable malis for tappese, 788  
 Which to ther cite dede so gret disese.  
 And of assent, with ther suerdis keene  
 Thei slouh the tiraunt in ther mortal teene.
- Of whos deth many a man was fayn, [p. 218] 792  
 And specialli of Heracle the cite,  
 Dempte it was meedful that he was so slayn,  
 To sette in quiete al a comounte.  
 Loo, heer men may the rihtful guerdoun see 796  
 Of tirauntis, which bi ther violence  
 Toppresse the peple ha[ue] no conscience!

by oppressing  
 the people and  
 revoking their  
 liberties, until  
 he was hated  
 by everyone.

But Fortune  
 punished his  
 abominable  
 conduct  
 through a good  
 knight,  
 Leonides, who  
 with a comrade  
 took vengeance  
 and slew him.

Many a man  
 was glad of his  
 death.

[How the vicious Denys kyng of Cicile slouh his  
 brethre and kynrede, and aftir exiled deied at  
 mischeff.]<sup>1</sup>

- A**FFTIR this tiraunt, *with* a ful heuy cheere  
 And contenaunce pitous and lamentable, 800  
 Onto Bochas Denys dede appeere,  
 Which in tirannye was most importable,  
 Thoruh [al] his land hatful and repreuable.  
 But, for al that, he gan myn auctour preie 804  
 Of his maneres sumwhat to write & seie.

After this  
 tyrant,  
 Dionysius,  
 tyrant of  
 Syracuse,  
 appeared:

785. elmesse R.  
 801. Dionise P.

- but Bochas would not take the trouble to mention his lineage, because he was so full of all vices. Bochas list nat rehersen his lynage  
Nor make no processe of his geneallogie,  
Because he was, with al his gret outrage, 808  
Ful of alle vices, pride and lecherie,  
Of auarice, of ire and of envie.  
In Cecile he heeld his roial see  
At Siracusic, a myhti strong cite. 812
- Cursed and malicious of nature, he slew all his relations that he might rule alone undisturbed. This Denys was cursed of nature,  
Most malicious bothe of thouht & deede;  
For, as it is remembrid in scripture,  
He slouh his brethre, his cosyns & kynreede, 816  
That he allone myhte in pes posseede  
Withoute trouble or interupcioun  
Of al Cecile the myhti regioun.
- He was idle, licentious and a drunkard. Among his\* vices, Bochas doth specefie, 820  
He gan drawn onto idilnesse,  
Folwede his lustis of fowl lecherie,  
And ofte of custum he fill in dronkenesse,  
And thouhte it was most souereyn blissidnesse, 824  
Lik as he hadde be maister of Fortune,  
To folwe his lustis & ay theryn contune.
- and became blind and fat, and with the help of robbers and aliens unjustly slew nearly all the inhabitants of his city. He wex riht fat & wonder corciuous,  
And his eien gan derken of ther siht, 828  
That vnnethe this man most vicious  
Ne miht nat weel beholde the daies liht.  
And of malis this tiraunt ageyn riht,  
With helpe of robbours & of fals foreyns, 832  
Slouh of his cite nih al the citeseyns.
- Although it is unpleasant to hear or tell about his vicious life, I shall briefly relate how he made his men despoil a large number of women of their garments in the temple at Cythera, His vicious lyff in ordre to reherse  
Wer contagious to the audience;  
His extort pillages wrouhte in Grece & Perse, — 836  
For to write or telle hem in sentence  
Wolde infecte the heir with pestilence.  
But I wil breefli remembryn & descryue  
The sacrileges which he dede his lyue. 840  
In Venus temple beside Citheroun  
A gret[e] noumbre of wommen he leet call,  
Ful weel beseyn; and be oppressiouen  
He made his meyne vnwarli on hem fall. 844

806. his] this R. 816. 2nd his] om. H.

820. his] all B, R, J, P. 826. theryn] ther H.

833. the] his H.

Dispoiled them, so that on and all  
Bi his outrage and froward violence,  
Thei naked stood echon in his presence.

And whan he sauh ther shap & ther fetures, 848 and after he  
And ches such out as wer to his plesauce, looked them  
Robbyng the remnaunt, took from them *þer* vestures over and  
And leet hem goon withoutyn ordenaunce. chose such as  
And for this vnkouth abhominable chaunce pleased him,  
852 Ther cite Locrois aros with myhti hond, sent the rest  
For his outrage banshyng hym ther lond. away naked.

Another tyme he dide also soiourne  
Withyne the temple, lik as it is told, 856 Once when he  
Of Iubiter, sone onto Saturne. saw in the  
Ther beholdyng his reliques manyfold, temple of  
Sauh among other a mantel large of gold, Jupiter a mantle  
Wherupon whan he caste his look, of gold among  
860 That riche iewel onto his eus he took. the god's  
possessions,

And thus he saide, hymselfen to excuse, —  
“It was to heuy and to comerous  
In somer sesoun that mantel for to vse,  
Because it was to large & ponderous.” 864  
And ouermor he aleggid for hym thus:  
“Sithe the garnement forgid was of gold,  
For wynter sesoun how it was to cold.” 868

And whan he gan away the mantel pulle,  
Than riht anon this tiraunt deceyuable  
Gaff hym another sengle maad of wolle,  
Affermede, sothli it was mor couenable, —  
872 To other sesoun mor meete and agreable,  
Concludyng thus: “for somer it was liht,\*  
And warm for wyntir to were the frosti niht.”

Another tyme, this tiraunt eek also, [p. 219] 876 Another time  
Which was of herte most auaricious, he saw a  
Entrid onys the temple of Appollo statue of  
And of his sone Esculapius. Apollo with a  
And whan this tiraunt fel & contrarius smooth chin and  
880 Beheld Appollo berdles, that was old, an Esculapius  
And Esculapius with a berd\* of gold, wearing a  
beard of gold;

854. banysshying H.

861. vse H.

869. mantel] matil H.

874. liht] to liht B, R, J.

876. R omits to line 2212 inclusive. 882. long berd B, J.

and, saying that  
it was strange  
that the father  
should be  
beardless, pulled  
away  
Æsculapius'  
golden beard  
and made off  
with it.

Wherever he  
went he robbed  
the temples,  
and lived like a  
chief,

until the  
Syracusans had  
enough of his  
evil habits and  
banished him,  
and he died  
a fugitive.

Quod Denys thanne, "as seemeth onto me,  
Heer is a straunge froward conveyence, 884  
That the fader berdles sholde be,  
The sone berdid stonde in his presence."  
Made anon bi sturdi violence  
To take away the berd, which in his siht 888  
Of most fyn gold shon so cleer & briht.

Thoruh Grece and Perse wher-euer he dede gon,  
In al the templis this was his vsaunce:  
The statli reliques with many riche ston 892  
And massiff tablis of myhti gret substaunce,  
To take them alle that wer to his plesaunce.  
He spared non; thus lyuyng lik a theef  
Til he be vengauce was brouht [vn]to myscheeff. 896

Syracusany, wher he was crowned kyng,  
Alle of assent, ther is no mor to seyne,  
For his outragis & vicious lyuyng,  
Thei ban[y]shed hym neuer to kome ageyn. 900  
And so this tiraunt, vacaunt, wente in veyn  
Aboute the world as a fals fugityff;  
And so at myscheeff this Denys loste his lyff.

### [Lenvoy.]

This tragedy  
gives a warning  
to all rulers  
not to be  
pillagers and  
tyrants.

**T**HIS tragedie yiueth a warnyng 904  
To all[e] tho that haue domynacioun  
Ouer the peple, prince, duk or kyng,  
Teschewe rauyne and fals extorsioun.  
Bit them considre, how bi thoccasioun 908  
Of foul pillage & froward tirannye  
This said Denys at myscheeff muste die.

Dionysius slew  
indiscriminately  
and rejoiced in  
robbery and  
murder;

First he compassed, falsli imagynyng,  
To slen the citeseyns of his roial touz, 912  
His brethre, his cosyns, his kynrede nat sparyng,  
Brouht al his blood onto destruccioun,  
In slauhtre he hadde such delectacioun,  
Reioisshyng euere in moordre & robberie, 916  
Which caused hym at myscheeff for to die.

884. froward conveyence] disconvenyence H.

905. tho] om. H.

911. *This stanza is misplaced next to the last one of the Envoy H*

— First he] He also H.



To spoille templis was most his reioysshyng,  
 Took al ther tresours to his pecessioun,  
 Tablis of gold with stonys fressh shynyng;  
 Eek fro the\* goddis the reliques he took doun  
 Wher-euer he rod in any regioun.  
 Whos sacrilege & compassed felonie  
 Caused hym vnwarli in myscheeff for to die.

sacrilegious, he  
 delighted most  
 in spoiling  
 temples and  
 the gods of their  
 920 relics.

In Venus temple, be record of writyng,  
 He dede a foul froward abusioun,  
 Al gentil-women that cam ther to offryng,  
 Them he dispoiled, as maad is mencioniun,  
 Leet hem go naked, withoute excepcioun.  
 For which diffame & gret vngent[e]rie  
 He bashed was & dede in myscheef die.  
 Noble Pryncis, remembreth on this thyng:  
 Compassed malis & fals collusioun  
 Mut haue euel eende\* & come to rek[e]nyng,  
 Fraude ay with fraude resceyueth his guerdoun.  
 Hath this in mynde, concludyng on resoun,  
 That all tirauntis, pleynli to specefie,  
 Hadde heer short lyff or dede at myscheeff die.

924  
 In the temple  
 of Venus he  
 foully stripped  
 gentewomen  
 of their  
 928 clothes and  
 let them go  
 naked. Finally  
 he was  
 banished, and  
 died in mischief.  
 Noble Princes,  
 remember that  
 such behaviour  
 932 has no good  
 end.

¶ **Thauctour ageyn presumpcious [peple and] Princis  
 halding pem-self goddis.**

**Y**E folk that been astonid in your auys  
 To seen tirauntes þat wer\* incorrigible  
 Left from ther sees, þat held hemsilf\* so wis,  
 Thouhte ther poweer was verray inuyncible,  
 Thouh tofor God nothyng is impossible;  
 Wherfor remembreth, & doth nothyng meruaille,  
 With vnwar fallis thouh Fortune hem assaile.  
 For whan tirauntis been sette on hih[e] stages  
 Off dignites, regnyng lik wood leouns,  
 Ful harde it is to wresten ther corages  
 Outher to tempere ther disposiciounis.  
 Worldli felicite so blyndeth ther resouns,

940  
 Ye who are  
 astonished to  
 see incorrigible  
 tyrants, who  
 deemed them-  
 selves  
 invincible,  
 lifted from their  
 thrones, should

948  
 know that  
 nothing is  
 impossible to  
 God.

921. the] ther B, J.

934. eende] eendyng B, endyng J, ending P.

939. *The omission in the heading is supplied from J, leaf 89 recto.*

940. wer] been B.

941. held hemsilf] hemsilf held B, hem helde J.

As thei to God wer egal of poweer,  
And hadde Fortune vnder ther daungeer. 952

One need only  
think of  
Dionysius.

Record of Denys, that ofte was affraied [p. 220]

Bassaut of Fortune, lik as was his fate,  
For vicious luyng thre tymes disamaied,  
As his stori remembreth of old date. 956

[¶] Next on the ryng now kometh Pollicrate  
With oon Victurbius, tirauntis of Itaille,  
Regnyng lik wolues toppressen the poraille.

Polycrates and  
Victurbius were  
tyrants of  
Italy, who  
reigned like  
wolves; and  
when such men  
believe in their  
pride that God  
cannot put them  
down,

For whan tirauntis in dyuers regiouns 960

Of surquedie cachche an oppynyoun,  
That ther estatis & domynaciouns  
Sholde euere endure bi long successioun,  
As Godde nor Fortune myhte nat putte hem doun, 964

But as thei wern in ther estat roiall  
This world to reule, to bothe too egall.

and, having lost  
all shame and  
dread, laugh  
at Fortune,

[First] toward God thei ha[ue] lost shame & dreed  
Touchynng his guerdouns outhur of ioie or peyne, 968

Indifferent atween trouthe or falsheed, —  
Ther lust Iserued; no fors who lauhhe or pleyne.  
God is forgetyn; at Fortune thei disdeyne,  
As bothe wern recleymed to ther lure, 972  
Falsli transcending the boundis of mesure.

sometimes God  
allows her to  
favour them for  
a time, as if  
she really were  
willing to  
accomplish their  
desires.

For which sumtyme, as bookes specesie,  
God list suffre, as maad is mencion,  
That Fortune bi a maner moquerie 976

Fauoureth summe folk, lik ther oppynyoun  
Tenhaunce ther poweer bi fals decepcioun,  
As she wer set, pleynli for to seie,  
To serue ther lust & durst nat disobeie. 980

[How kyng Pollicrate for extorcion and tiranmye  
was honged til euery ioynt went from othir.]<sup>1</sup>

This was the  
case with  
Polycrates,  
tyrant of  
Samos,

RECORD I take on proude Pollicrate,  
Tiraunt of Sammois, beside þe se Egge,  
Which sore laboured erli & eek late,  
Ageyn conscience, of furious cruelte, 984

953. Dionise P. 957. No indication of new ¶ in MSS.

967. First] om. J.

971. forgotten P — Fortune] om. J.

975. list] list nat H.

982. Samos P.

MS. J. leaf 89 verso.

Tabounde in richesse & for to ha[ue] plente  
Of worldli tresours, deemyng that Fortune ay  
To his desirs ne durste nat sey nay.

Fortune to hym bi many dyuers signe  
Shewed outward gret toknis of plesau[n]ce,  
Was to hym eek riht fauourable & benigne  
In al hir port bamaner attendaunce,  
As she hadde been vnder his obeissaunce  
To stuffe his coffres *with* tresours lokked faste,  
Of fals entent to mokke hym atte laste.

988 to whom  
Fortune shewed  
so many  
favours that it  
appeared almost  
as if she were  
in his power.

992

Alle worldli richesse his lustis dede obeie;  
And whan he fond she was so fauourable,  
For a sesoun, as she that list to pleie,  
This blynde goddess, vnseur & euere\* vnstable,  
Set hym so hih[e] up at Famys table,  
Of fals entent, in his estat roiall  
Whan he sat hiest to make *hym* haue a fall.

996 And so he  
believed. But  
when he was  
seated highest  
at the table of  
fame, she  
decided to give  
him a fall.

1000

For in hymself of pride he gan to deeme  
How that he stood most in prosperite  
Of them that wered crowne or diadeeme,  
Aboue al other in most felicite.  
And thus enhaunsed in his roial see,  
Thouhte hym egal with goddis in comvne,  
Fer from al daunger of Fate or of Fortune.

1004 He thought in  
his pride that he  
was an equal  
of the gods,

1008

And for tatempte of goddis the poweer,  
And of Fortune the variaunt doubilnesse,  
He took a ryng of gold ful briht & cleer,  
Theryn a rubi of excellent richesse,\*  
Sekyng occasioun of sum newe heuynesse,  
Which neuer afforn hadde knowe of no such thyng, —  
Into the se anon he cast his ryng,

1012 and to tempt  
their power  
and the  
doubleness of  
Fortuna, he  
cast a rich ring  
into the sea,

Dise[s]peired ageyn [it] to recure,  
For he dempte it was an impossible.  
But rihte anon fissheres of auenture,  
Lik a meruaile verray incredible,  
Among the wawes hidous & horrible  
Caste in ther nettis, yiff it wolde auaille,  
Takyng a fissh, the ryng in his entraille.

1016 not hoping ever  
to see it again.  
Yet a fish  
swallowed it and  
soon afterwards  
was caught and  
presented to  
him at a feast,  
1020 and his carver  
found the ring  
in its inside,

998. & euere] euere & B.

999. so hihe up at] hih upon H. 1004. or] of H.

1008. al] al þe H — 2nd of] om. J — or] & H.

1012. richesse] rednesse B, J.

Which was presented at a solempnite  
 To Pollicrate with ful gret reuerence, 1024  
 Whan he sat crowned in his most dignite  
 At a feeste of famous excellence.  
 The fissh vndon anon in his presence,  
 Mid thentrailles his keruere fond the ryng 1028  
 Of auenture, & took it to the kyng.

which made  
 Polycrates  
 believe that  
 Neptune, not  
 daring to offend  
 his majesty,  
 had restored to  
 him his ring.

Which dempte of pride and hih presumpcioun,  
 That Neptunvs, god of the salte se,  
 Hadde of his ryng maad restitucioun, 1032  
 And durste nat offende his mageste.  
 Wherupon a fantasie kauht he,  
 Nouthen heuenli goddis no[r] Fortune blynde of siht  
 Wer bothe vnhardy tatempte ageyn his myht. 1036

But God and  
 Fortune were  
 aware of his  
 presumption and  
 threw him down  
 when he least  
 expected it.

His gret outrage to God was nat vnknowe; [p. 221]  
 And his presumpcioun Fortune hath weel espied,  
 For which she maad aduersite been[de] hir bowe,  
 And of hir wheel the spokes she hath so guyed, 1040  
 Wheron he sat most richeli magnified,  
 That he vnwarli dou[n] from his hih noblesse  
 Was brouht ful lowe in sorwe & wrechchidnesse.

Fortune is  
 never more to  
 be feared than  
 when she is  
 most smiling.

In worldly\* glorie nothyng is mor to dreede, 1044  
 Than whan Fortune is most blandisshyng,  
 And that hir flatiri is fret with worldli meede,  
 Hih on hir wheel to make foolis synge;  
 Than of hir nature sorwe she doth [in] brynge, — 1048  
 Witnesse of princis, of olde or newe date,  
 And record also of proude Pollicrate.

Her temple is  
 made of glass,  
 not steel, and  
 her crystal ice  
 is unsafe to  
 stand upon.

Sumtyme he sat hih on Fortunys wheel,  
 Of prosperite with bemys cleer shynyng, 1052  
 Whos temple is maad of glas & nat off steel;  
 Hir\* cristal yys vnwarli dissoluyng,  
 Thouth it be fressh outward in shewyng,  
 Vnseur to stonde on, & brotil for tabide, 1056  
 Who trusteth most, most likli is to slide.

Orontes, Darius'  
 constable, began  
 a war on Samos,

This gerissh queen, of cheer & face double,  
 Withdrouh hir fauour & began to varie  
 Fro Pollicrates, sette hym in sorwe & trouble, 1060  
 Wex ageyn hym maliciousli contrarie,

1028. þe Entraile H, the entrail R 3.

1040. hir wheel] his queele H.

1044. worldly] wordlis B, J — glorie] ioy P. 1054. Hir] His B.

Causyng Orontes, constable with kyng Darie,  
Maugre this tiraunt in his most cruelte,  
To gynne a werre on Sammoys his cite.

1064

And whan his glorie was most cleer of liht,  
And his noblesse shon hiest atte fulle,  
Fortune gan thoruh hir chaungable myht  
Of his prosperite the fethris for to pull.  
And thanne at erst his corage gan to dull,  
And alle his pride vnwarli for tappalle,  
Whan he was spoiled of his richessis alle.

and when Polycrates' glory shone brightest, Fortune began to pull the feathers of his prosperity.

1068

First whan Orontes his contre gan assaill,  
This Pollicrate of sodeyn auenture  
Outraied was & taken in bataill

1072

He was taken in battle and chained in prison;

Bi a full pereilous mortal disconfiture.  
Thus koude Fortune bryngen him\* to lure  
Thoruh hir vnwar, ougli, fals disdeynes,  
Lad into\* prisoun & bounde in stronge cheynis.

1076

The people [that] duelte withynne his regeoun  
Reioisshed in herte to seen hym suffre peyne.

1080

and because he was a tyrant, his subjects were glad to see him suffer.

His tyrannye, his fals extorsioun

Caused that thei dede at hym disdeyne;

For of his deth[e] no man list compleyne.

Men thoruh the wor[l]d be glad & ha[ue] plesaunce

1084

To seen a tiraunt brouht onto myschaunce.

Foure thynges his tormentes dede aumete:

Sodeyn departyng from his old richesse,

And that he sauh ech man in his entente

1088

He lost his great possessions and saw that men rejoiced at his fall; and after that, he was hanged.

Of his myscheef ha[ue] so gret gladnesse;

Hanged he was, myn auctour berth witesse,

And heeng so long in tempest, reyn & thonder,

Til eueri ioynt from other went assonder.

1092

To beestis wilde & foulis\* rauynous,

Naked he heeng; such was his auenture:

To alle folk he was so odious,

Had in despiht off eueri creature,

1096

So odious he was to all folk, that they even denied him a decent burial.

At his departyng denied sepulture, —

1065. liht] siht H.

1068. for] om. H.

1071. richesse H.

1076. fortune koude bryngen hir B, fortune coude bringen him J.

1078. onto B. 1079. that] om. J.

1086. his tormentes] this Tiraunt H.

1093. foulis] folkis B, J.

Guerdoun for tirauntis vengable & rekles,  
That kannat suffre the peple to lyue in pes.

Thus may tyrants, who resemble cruel wolves, find their reward in hell with Polycrates.

Thus may tirauntis excedyn[g] ferr þer boundis 1100

Bi fals outrage, ful weel resembled be  
To cruel woluys or to furious houndis,  
Fret with an etik of gredi cruelte.

To staunche ther hunger auailleth no plente. 1104  
Which for ther surfetis, froward for to reede,  
With Pollicrates in helle shal ha[ue] ther meede.

[How the tiraunt Alisaundre/ slouh his philosopre  
Calistenes with othir for seyng trouthe.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas next heard the sad story of Callisthenes, dismembered for his fidelity.

**A** MONG alle stories to tell þe pitous caas  
Of woful pleyntiffs þat put hemsilf in pres 1108

With weeping eyen, myn auctour Iohn Bochas  
Was meued in herte nat to be rek[e]les

To write the falle of Calistenes,  
[The] which, alas, as it is remembred, 1112  
Was for his trouthe on pecis al dismembred.

and thought that even a man with a heart of stone would be moved by it to tears.

For whan Bochas his story gan aduerte,  
He dempte anon in his fantasie,  
No man hadde so harde a stonen herte, 1116

That mihte of riht his eyen keepen drie,  
To sen the processe of his tormentrie.

Yit gan myn auctour his woful penne proffre  
To write the wrong don to this philosopre. 1120

Callisthenes, virtuous in youth, devoted his best years to philosophy.

This Calistenes, in youthe riht weel thewed,  
His greene age promotid to doctryne,  
Bi influence of heuenli fate adewed,  
Gretli to proffite in moral disciplyne, 1124

Disposid of nature bi grace, which is dyuyne,  
To conquere, as bookis specefie,  
The noble surname of philosophie.

at whose breasts he was fed, and to whose milk no earthly balm may be compared.

Of his merites, famous & notable, 1128  
Philosophie dede hir besi peyne

To yiuue hym souke, because that he was able,  
The soote mylk of hir brestis tweyne,  
Most precious licour, who myhte therto atteyne: 1132

1100. exceden J.

1111. Calisthenes P.

1112. The] om. J.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 90 recto.

For bawme is non, the vertu weel declared,  
Of worldli richesse may be therto compared.

This precious pyment is youe vnto no foolis,  
Aboue all licours it doth so ferre excell,  
Whos origynal sprang in the hooli scoolis  
Of Athenys, as famous bookis tell;  
For of philosophie ther sprang out first þe well,  
Wher Calistenes, the experience is kouth,  
With fulsum plente was fostred in his youth.

1136 It is never  
given to  
dunces, and first  
sprang from the  
schools of  
Athens, where  
Callisthenes  
was fostered.

Thouh he was bor[e]n of a good lynage,  
Vertu maad hym mor hih up for tascende,  
To been enhaunsd for noblesse of corage  
Moor than for blood[e], who can comprehend:  
For philisophres & clerkis mor commende  
The moral vertues entresoured be writyngis,  
Than al the tresours of worldli crowned kynges.

1140  
1144 Though born  
of good family,  
virtue saw that  
he ascended  
even higher:

Of gentil stokkes rekne out the issues,  
That be descendid doum from a roial lyne:  
Yif þei be vicious & void of al vertues  
And ha[ue] no tarage of vertuous disciplyne,  
With temporal tresour thouh thei florshe & shyne,  
As for a tyme sitting on hih[e] stages,  
Withoute vertu thei ar but ded images.

1148 for moral worth  
is greater than  
descent from  
royal line.

For thouh princis ha[ue] conquered be bataill  
This world in roundnesse bi ther cheualrie,  
What may ther tryumphes or noblesse auaille,  
Withoute that vertu be riht ther titles gye,  
To be compared vnto philosophie?  
For philisophres applie al ther ententis  
To knowe heuene & cours of elementis.

1156 1160 Though princes  
conquer the  
world by battle,  
their triumphs  
avail little  
unless they are  
guided by  
virtue.

Thei sette no stoor of thynges transitorie,  
Nor of Fortunys expert doubilnesse;  
To heuenli thynges is set al ther memorie,  
How the seuene planetes in ther cours hem dresse,  
Meuyng of steris, sparklyng in ther brihtnesse,  
With reuoluciouns of the speeris nyne,  
Moodres of musik, as auctours determyne.

1164 1168 Philosophers do  
not care for  
transitory  
things, but turn  
to the seven  
planets, the  
mothers of  
music.

And in the noble tweyne famous housis  
Flouryng in Grece, richest of euerichon,  
Cald bi old date the faire trewe spousis

1172 Athens and its  
Academy were  
the bright  
lanterns of the  
world.

1135. is] was H. 1166. ther] þe H.

- Of philosphres, many mo than oon,  
 In Achademye & in Athenys shon  
 The briht lanternis of most reuerencis,  
 This world tenlumyne bi liberal sciences. 1176
- Callisthenes studied in the schools of Socrates and Plato, who held the key of secret mysteries and of the divine idea,  
 And among other this Calistenes  
 Was in his youthe put for to scoleie  
 In the too scooles of prudent Socrates  
 And of Plato, which that bar the keie 1180  
 Of secre mysteries & of dyvyn Ideie.  
 In which too scooles of gret habilitie  
 Was non proffited halff so moch as he.
- and had all sciences hidden within their breasts.  
 These olde clerkis, these too philosphres 1184  
 Wer in tho daies for doctrine souereyne  
 Callid in this world the riche *precious* coffres  
 And tresoreris, that kepte the chestis tweyne  
 Amyd ther brestis, wheryn God ded ordeyne, 1188  
 Most cleer pocesioniun put in ther depos,  
 Of alle sciences vnder a keye cloos.
- He was also a pupil of Aristotle, who chose him to attend Alexander,  
 This Calistenes, scoleer & auditour  
 Of Aristotiles, bi kunnyng conqueryng 1192  
 The noble *gemme* & the most *precious* flour  
 Of philosophie, al flour[e]s surmountyng,  
 Wherthoruh he was chose in his luyyng,  
 As his maister list for hym prouide, 1196  
 On Alisandre tawaiten & abide.
- when Alexander asked him to send him a philosopher to magnify his conquests by good counsel, to record his triumphs,  
 For Alisaundre, of kynges most enteere  
 And most worthi, to speke of hih prowesse,  
 Dede Aristotiles humbeli requere, 1200  
 To prouide & doon his bisynesse  
 Bi expert knowyng & aussynesse  
 To sende hym oon, which of philosophie  
 Mihte bi good counsail his conquest magnefie. 1204
- and to direct him in moral virtue.  
 To write also his tryumphes digne of glorie [p. 223]  
 And to remembre his actis marciall,  
 Put his palmys of kniithod in memorie,  
 And to directen in especial 1208  
 His roial noblesse in vertu morall,  
 That non errour be sey[e]n heer nor there  
 In hym that sholde al the world conquere.

1178. for] forth H, R 3 — scoleys H. 1180. keys H.

1181. Ideies H.

1210. be] wer H. 1211. the] this H.



- But it fill so of knihtli auenture,  
That of Fortunis hih promocioun,  
That he bi armys proudli gan recure  
Of Perse and Mede the myhti regioun,  
Brouhte kyng Darie onto subieccioun,  
Gat hool his tresour, that no man myhte expresse  
Tacounte the noumbre of his gret richesse.
- Which vnseur tresour & slidyng habundaunce,  
With wastyng shadwes of godis transitorie,  
In surquedous pride gan so his herte auauance  
Bi fals ambicioun & outraious veynglorie,  
That made hym lese mynde & eek memorie,  
To knowe of nature he was no man mortall,  
But lik to goddis that wer celestiall.
- Aboute the palme of old[e] conquerours,  
Knihtli tryumphes, conquestis marcial,  
He vsurped be title of his labours  
To heuenli goddis for to been egal.  
And thoruh his merites most imperiall,  
He gan presume be lyne he was allied  
With the seuene goddis for to be deified.
- Thoruh al his paleis & his roial halle  
A lawe he sette, upon peyne of lyff,  
That men of custum sholde hym name & calle  
This worldis\* monarke, nat mortal nor passiff,  
Sone to Iubiter for a prerogatyff,  
Which hadde the erthe, as god most of puissaunce,  
Conquered bi swerd onto his obeissaunce.
- Bi ful auys purposed for the nonys,  
Of pompous outrage & surquedous entente,  
Ful gret tresor of gold & precious stonis  
Vnto the temple of Iubiter he sente,  
That the bisshoppis & preestis sholde assente  
Hym to resceyue at his hom komyng  
Lik as a god, & lik no mortal kyng.
- Thus bextort dreed & bi vsurpid myht  
Was first brouht in foul idolatrie,  
Causyng pryncis to resceyue ageyn riht  
Godli reuerence of froward maumetrie.  
But whan Calistenes this errour dede espie

1212 But after his conquest of the Medes and Persians,

1216

1220 Alexander grew proud, and, no longer considering himself a mortal man,

1224

1228 aspired to be an equal of the seven gods of heaven and presumed to be deified.

1232

He ordained that men should call him the son of Jupiter,

1236

1240 and bribed the priests to receive him as a god.

1244

1248 Thus idolatry originated. But when Callisthenes saw Alexander's error, he endeavored to correct it.

1221. auauance] enhance H, enhance R 3, H 5.

1222. outraious] contagious H.

1236. Thes wordis H — wordlis B. 1246. kyng] thyng H, P.

- In Alisaundre, he bisili dide entende 1252  
 This fals oppynyoun to correcte & amende.
- Five proofs he gave him that he was only a mortal man:  
 Bi fyue causes, notable to reherse,  
 This Calistenes in especial,  
 Thouh he was kyng of Egipt, Mede & Perse, 1256  
 He preued of resoun he was a man mortall,  
 His berthe eek erthli & nat celestially,  
 Fader, moodet as of ther natures  
 Born for to deie lik other creatures. 1260
- His father and mother were worldly folk and in no respect celestial, and both of them had died.  
 His fader Phelipp, of Macedoyne kyng,  
 His mooder callid Olympiades,  
 Worldli folk & heuenli [in] no thyng,  
 With kyngis, queenis upset bi hih encres. 1264  
 Yit ageyn deth thei koude ha[ue] no reles,  
 Lawes of nature maugre ther will tobeie,  
 Nat lik goddis, but onli born to deie.
- They were subject to various passions and infirmitas, and nothing deified them on earth but flattery and dread.  
 Kynde made hem subject to sundri passiounz 1268  
 And many vnkouth dyuers infirmytes,  
 Now glad, now heuy of condiciounz,  
 Folwyng the fourme of ther humanytes.  
 But of ther false vsurpede dietes, 1272  
 I can nat seyn, sauff dreed & flat[e]rie  
 Wrongli in erthe dede hem deifie.
- Alexander himself, for all his power, suffered the passions of health and sickness.  
 Eek Alisaundre folwyng euere his lust,  
 For al his lordshepe & his gret[e] myht, 1276  
 He suffred passiounz of hunger & of thrust,  
 Now hool, now sik, now heuy and now liht.  
 Whos entrechaungyng in euery mannys siht  
 Cleerli shewed, cleerkis reherse kan, 1280  
 He was no god, but lik a mortal man.
- Once he became very ill from bathing in the Nile when overheated and nearly died,  
 It fill onys, myn auctour doth compile,  
 In a gret heete, long or he was old,  
 He bathed hymself[e] in the flood of Nile, 1284  
 Wher of fortune he sodenli took cold:  
 His pooris opned on parties manyfold,  
 Lay long aftir, his story berth witnessse,  
 Or he was curid of that gret seeknesse. 1288
- and when finally he recovered, it was through medicine and not divine power.  
 But at the laste, bi crafft of medecyne [p. 224]  
 Delyuered he was of that infirmyte,  
 Nothyng amendid bi his power dyuene,  
 Bi myht of Iuno nor Iubiteres pouste, 1292

1264. upset bi] set up to H. 1277. 2nd of] oft H.

Nor bi his owne vsurpid deite:  
For bi the passiouns which he dede endure,  
It shewed he was a dedli creature.

Off hym also it is maad menciuon,  
He hadde in custum to falle in dronkenesse,  
Thoruh vinolence loste ofte his resoun;  
Than of ire and furious hastynesse  
He wolde smyte & hurte in his woodnesse.  
Which toknys wern, pleynli to termyne,  
In his persone nat heuenli nor dyuayne.

1296 He also had a habit of getting drunk and acting like a madman, which was hardly a proof of divinity.

1300

Whan the philisophre callid Calistenes  
Gan first conside al thes condiciouns  
In Alisandre, he put hym silff in pres,  
Void of dissymulung or long\* dilaciouns,  
For to reffourme such fals ambiciouns  
Of godly honours,\* which men dede on hym feyne,<sup>1308</sup>  
And from all vices his corage to restreyne.

1304 Callisthenes told Alexander all these things without fear or dissembling.

In this purpos as eny centre stable,  
He cast hym fulli of trewe entencioun  
To correcte al that was repreuable  
Vsid in his persone or in his regeoun.  
Trouthe gaff hym herte lik a champioun,  
To telle the kyng in his estat roial,  
He was no god, but as a man mortal.

Truth gave him the heart of a champion.

1312

For which the kyng of indignacioun  
Kauhte a quarel ageyn Calistenes,  
Put upon hym vniustli fals tresoun,  
Onli to slen his maister causeles.  
And for tateynte hym, affor[n] al the pres  
Saide how he hadde of his iniquite  
Conspired ageyn his roial mageste.

1316

1320 But the king became so angry, that he openly accused Callisthenes of conspiring to slay him.

And feyned also, the silue same tyme,  
How he had maad a conspiracioun  
Ageyn his lord, bi an horrible cryme  
Interuptyng the religioun  
Of his dyuayne institucioun;  
That in such caas, ther was no bettir reed,  
But Calistenes bi lawe mut be ded.

1324 and also said very untruthfully that Callisthenes had interfered with the religion which he had divinely instituted, and therefore must die.

1328

1298. vinolence] violence H — ofte] oftene H.

1306. or long] & B.

1308. godly honours] goodli honour B, J, godly honour P.

1316. as] om. H, P, H 5.

1321. for] om. H. 1324. And] om. H.

They hewed off  
his hands and  
feet and tore out  
his eyes

And to prolong of his deth the peyne,  
Vpon a boord he was leid along, 1332  
His feet smet of & his hondes tweyne,  
His eyen rent out: wer nat his peynes strong?  
Thus kan tirauntes, whan them list do wrong,  
Slen philisophres withoutyn any routhe, 1336  
Which spared nat for to seyn hem trouthe.

and cut off his  
lips and nostrils,  
and exhibited  
his mutilated  
body to the  
army.

This cruel vengauce mihte nat suffice;  
But Alisaundre, mor tencrece his wo,  
Dede kutte his lippis in ful cruel wise, 1340  
His nose-thrillis, his eres eek also.  
And with the bodi he badde men sholde go  
Toforn his host[e], as it is remembrid,  
To shewe the trunke, how it was dismembrid. 1344

After that, he  
was thrown into  
a dark cave  
filled with  
madly barking  
dogs.

In a caue, deep & wonder lowe,  
Solitarie, dirked al the boundis,  
Aftir the[s] peynes he made hym to be throwe,  
The place stuffid with wood berkyng houndis, 1348  
Of fals entent to reende his bloodi woundis.  
Til Lisymachus, of gret compassioun,  
To shorte his torment gaf [to] hym poisoun.

Finally  
Lysimachus  
compassionately  
gave him poison  
to shorten his  
agony.  
Alexander, you  
ought to be  
ashamed of  
yourself!

Who radde euer of tormentis more\* terrible! 1352  
O Alisaundre, thou ouhtest been ashamed  
To slen thi clerk with peynes so horrible,  
For thi viciis because he hath the blamyd!  
Thi roial name therbi is diffamyd. 1356  
But euer tirauntes, whan them list be wood,  
Of innocentes reioisshe to sheede [the] blood.

But far from  
being ashamed,  
he was so  
furious with  
Lysimachus that  
he shut him  
up with a fierce  
lion.

Ageyn this kniht, gentil Lisymachus,  
Because he hadde of hym compassioun, 1360  
Kyng Alisaundre was malencolious.  
Withoute cause, title or offensioun  
Leet shet[e] hym up with a fers leoun,  
Void of al helpe for to be socourid, 1364  
Of entencioun he sholde be deuoured.

However,  
Lysimachus  
ran at the lion  
like a knight  
and rent out  
his tongue,  
which brave  
deed restored  
him to  
Alexander's  
favour.

But Lysymachus quit hym lik a kniht  
Ageyn this leoun in the same place.  
Ran fersli on hym, & of his marcial myht 1368  
Out of his hed his\* tunge he dede arace.  
Reconciled to the kynges grace,

1331. to] *om.* H. 1351. to] *om.* J, P — to hym gaf H.

1352. more] most B. 1362. offensioun] affeccioun H.

1369. his] the B.

- Because that he so knihtli hath hym born,  
Bettir cherished than euer he was beform. 1372
- Another kniht, that callid was Clitus, [p. 225] Another knight  
Famous in armys for his cheualrie, who was a great  
On the grettest of the kyngis hous, friend of the  
And most comendid of prudent policie, 1376 king,  
Most famyler, as bookis specefie,  
Aboute the kyng, as it was ofte preued,  
To tempre his corage whan he was agreed, —
- The kyng & he walkyng hond be hond 1380 once praised  
Withynne the paleis, beyng in presence Philip so  
Princis, dukis of many dyuers lond, highly in  
Wher thei began be notable elloquence Alexander's  
Remembre of armys the marciall\* excellence 1384 presence, that  
Of conquerours & worthi knihtis olde; Alexander, in  
And eueri man aboute his tale tolde. his envy,
- Among[e] which Clitus, that gentil kniht,  
Gan to comende & gretli magnefie 1388  
Phelipp Macedoyne, as hym ouhte of riht,  
Bothe of [his] wisdam & his cheualrie.  
Til Alisaundre hadde therat envie,  
Gan disdeyne of furious cruelte 1392  
That any sholde be comendid mor than he.
- Cauhte occasioun of ire & fals hatreede  
Ageyn [t]his kniht, that was to hym most trewe,  
With a sharp swerd vnwarli made hym bleede, 1396  
His herte blood, hoot & red of hewe,  
Bi his sides railyng doun of newe, —  
Therbi to preue, this stori telle can,  
He was no god nor resonable man. 1400
- Thus in pryncis furious & cruell  
Men may cleerli an euidence see,  
How ther lordshipe is nat perpetuell,  
But ful of chaung & mutabilite: 1404  
Of cheer now freendli, now sodeyn enmyte;  
Record on Clitus, most in the kyngis grace,  
Vnwarli slayn, & dede no trespase.

1372. beform] ageyn toform H.

1375. On] oon of H.

1378. as] om. H.

1384. marciall] notable B, J.

1393. That] ban H.

1399. this] his H, R 3.

- Alexander, who  
slew his friends  
in outrageous  
fits of anger,  
was certainly  
not worthy to  
be deified. 1408
- Was he worthi to be deified,  
This Alisandre, most double of his corage?  
Or was he worthi to be stelled, fied,  
This furious prince for his fel outrage,  
That slouh his freendis in his mortal rage? 1412
- Thus far[e]n tirauntis whan them list be wood,  
To seeke occasioun for to sheede blood.
- He who trusts  
tyrants shall  
soonest be  
deceived. 1416
- Calisten slayn for moral disciplyne,  
And Lysymachus for his compassion!  
Eek this tiraunt of fals gredi rayne  
Slouh gentil Clitus ageyn trouthe & resoun,  
As ye han herd, for comendacioun  
Of kyng Phelipp, this stori weel conceyued, — 1420  
Who trusteth tirauntis shal sonnest be deceyued!

## Lenvoye.

- This tragedie  
tells about  
Callisthenes,  
who was slain  
by Alexander
- T**HIS tragedie off Calistenes  
Declareth vs be notable remembraunce,  
He was with Plato & old Socrates 1424  
In his youthe put vnder gouernaunce,  
Drank of the mylk bi plenteuous habundaunce  
Of ther too scooles, euer deuoid of slouthe,  
Last bi Alisaundre dismembrid for his trouthe. 1428
- because he said  
the truth.
- First he was sent bi Aristotiles  
For tawaite bi prudent purueyaunce  
On Alisandre, list he wer rek[e]les,  
Bi presumpcioun in his roial puissaunce 1432  
To take upon hym godly\* attendaunce,  
Which he withstood; alas, it was gret routhe,  
To be so slayn because he seide trouthe!
- Those who live  
with tyrants  
must be able  
to flatter and  
lie and be  
deceitful of  
heart.
- Who with tirauntis list put hymself in pres, 1436  
To haue ther fauour & stormy aqueyntaunce,  
He mut kunne\* flatre & fage dout[e]les,  
Be double of herte, with feyned contaunce,  
With cheer contreued doon his obseruaunce: 1440  
For feithful menyng slayn, & þat was routhe,  
Is\* Calistenes because he seide trouthe.

1433. goodli B, J, goodly R 3, P.

1436. list] om. H.

1438. kunne] kum B, come H, P.

1442. Is] In B.

Noble Pryncis, your subiectis keepe in pes,  
 Beth nat to hasti for to do vengeance;  
 For to tirauntes that be merciles  
 God sent short lyff & sodenli myschaunce.  
 Who seith [you] trouthe, hath no displesaunce,  
 Preente in your herte, how it was gret routhe  
 That Calistenes was slay[e]n for his trouthe.

1444 Noble Princes,  
 be not too  
 hasty to do  
 vengeance, for  
 God grants  
 short life to  
 tyrants.

1448

[How Alisaundre kyng of Pirothe auenturyng to  
 passe the flood of Acheronte, there at his bak/  
 bi his most trusty was dedly wounded.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR the compleynt of Calistenes,  
 Slayn tirauntli & dede no trespas,  
 Cam Alisaundre kyng of Pirothes,  
 His woundis bleedyng, onto Iohn Bochas,  
 To hym declaryng\* how he drowned was  
 In Acheronte, a ryuer of gret fame,  
 Beside a toun, Pandosia was the name.

And as it is remembred & Itold  
 Of this notable myhti strong cite,  
 It was in Grece bilt be daies olde,  
 And aftir Pirrus callid Pirothe,  
 Wher-as the kyng heeld his roial see.

And as Bochas also doth\* determyne,  
 This Alisaundre cam of the same lyne.

Of whos kynreede is maad pleyn mencion,  
 Sone to Achilles was this knyht\* Pirrus;  
 And next in ordre bi successioun,  
 Fader to Alisaundre was Neptolonijs,  
 Which hadde also, myn auctour tellith thus,  
 A ful fair douhtir, the story ye may seen,  
 Olympiades, of Macedoyne queen.

And she was weddid to Phelipp Macedo,  
 Whilom mooder, this queen of most renoun,  
 To Alisaundre, the stori tellith so,

1452 Alexander, king  
 of Epirus, next  
 appeared before  
 Bochas, telling  
 him how he  
 was drowned  
 in the Acheron,

1456

[p. 226] near the city  
 of Pandosia,  
 that was built  
 long ago.

1460

1464 Pyrrhus was son  
 of Achilles; and  
 Neoptolemus,  
 next in order,  
 was the father  
 of this  
 Alexander and  
 of Olympias,  
 queen of  
 Macedon,

1468

1472 who married  
 Philip and  
 became mother  
 of Alexander  
 the Great.

1446. sodenli] sodeyn J, R 3, H 5, sodeine P. . 1447. you] om. J.

1454. declaryng] declared B, J, P.

1460. callid] cam H.

1462. as] om. H, R 3, H 5 — Bochas also doth] bookis also  
 B, J, P.

1465. this] the J — knyht] kyng B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 91 verso.

- Which al the world brouht in subieccioun.  
Whos fader Phelipp, of gret affeccioun,  
Leet crowne the brother of Olympiades, 1476  
Callid Alisaundre, to regne in Pirothes.
- Alexander of Epirus was made king by Philip, who used him against nature,  
To whom [kyng] Phelipp, for his gret beute,  
Because he was so fair a creature,  
Hadde such affeccioun & specialte, 1480  
As it is remembred in scripture,  
Of fals foul lust ageyn[e]s [al] nature,  
As seith Bochas, I can hym nat excuse,  
Vnleeffulli he dede his beute vse. 1484
- which was a horrible deed, and too foul to write about.  
And bi mene of that horrible deede,  
Which to reherse is to foul a thyng,  
This said[e] Phelipp, in Bochas thus I reede,  
In Epirothes he made hym to be kyng; 1488  
And of extorsioun, be record of writyng,  
Causeles fro thens he dede enchace  
The kyng Arabba, tho regnyng in that place.
- Afterwards Alexander invaded Italy.  
And it fill aftir, the stori tellith so, 1492  
Of this Alisaundre, be cerious rehersaille,  
Vpon the deth of Phelipp Macedo,  
With a gret host [he] cam into Itaille,  
Supposyng gretli for to auaille 1496  
To occupie, aftir his proude entent,  
Hooli the boundis of al the occident.
- where Fortuna deceived him by first giving him victory over the people of Lucca.  
And thouth so be that Fortune be chaungable,  
Double also, bi cours of hir nature, 1500  
At his gynnyng he fond hir fauourable:  
Made hym twies proudli to recure  
Geyn them of Luk, to ther disconfiture  
To haue the feeld, & maugre al ther myht 1504  
Of verry force to putte hem vnto fliht.
- When he began this war in Italy.  
Ageyn Itaille whan he gan this werre,  
Fulli in purpos the Romeyns to assaille,  
Of hih presumpcioun proceede he gan so ferre, 1508  
With many prince that was in his bataille,  
To knowe afforn bi certeyn dyuynaille,  
Of his conquest the boundis for to caste,  
And of his lyff how longe it sholde laste. 1512

1478. kyng] *om.* J. 1482. al] *om.* P, J.

1488. Epirus P. 1491. Arribba H.

1493. cerious] Curious H. 1495. he] *om.* J, P.1504. &] *om.* H.



And in the temple of Iubiter the grete,  
 Bi dyuynours that wer expert & old,  
 Seruyng this god withynne the lond of Creete,  
 This was the ansuere which thei haue hym told, 1516  
 And it affermyd bi toknis manyfold,  
 How that he nat sholde eschewe þe dreedful date  
 Ouer the day assigned to his last fate.

he inquired his  
 fate of diviners,  
 who said that  
 he should

And thei also assigned[e] a place,  
 Therbi to haue knowlechyng mor cleer,  
 Vnder a cite, longe & large of space,  
 Callid Pandosia; & for to go mor neer,  
 Bi Acheronte, a famous gret ryueer; 1524  
 Told hym pleyntli, & koude no ferther seie,  
 Of necessite ther he muste [nedis] deie.

1520 die near a city  
 called Pandosia,  
 on the Acheron.

And thouh it wer an earnest & no iape,  
 Of God ordeyned nat to be set a-side,  
 He thouhte of wisdam his destyne tescap  
 And othirwise for hymself provide.  
 Cast in Grece no lenger to abide,  
 Wenyng this ryuer nor that fair cite, 1532  
 Sauf in Grece sholde nowher ellis be.

1528 He thought to  
 escape his  
 destiny by  
 leaving Greece,  
 where there  
 was such a  
 town and  
 river.

And for to sette hymself in assuraunce  
 Of entent teschewe his destyne,  
 In-to thre batailes departyng his puissaunce,  
 Cam to Itaille tofor Luk the cite.  
 Thei with helpe of Sammoys the contre,  
 With a gret poweer cam out anon riht,  
 Slouh al his knihtis & put hym vnto fliht. 1540

1536 Later on he  
 was defeated  
 by the Luccans,  
 and his knights  
 slain; and,

At the bak thei pursued hym so neer,  
 That his enmyes almost wer on hym fall,  
 Vn-tabregge, broke with the ryuer,  
 And ouerturnid with his plankis all.  
 And Acheronte men that ryuer call,  
 As was told hym bi a certeyn kniht  
 Which rood beform hym, the ryuer in his siht.

[p. 227<sup>1</sup>] closely pursued  
 by his  
 enemies, he  
 came to a  
 broken bridge  
 over a river;  
 1544

1516. the] his H.  
 1518. nat sholde] shuld not R 3, H 3.  
 1522. large & long H.  
 1526. ther] þat H — nedis] om. H 5.  
 1539. out] om. H.  
 1542. wer almost H.

<sup>1</sup> In B, upper corner of leaf, later band: "my Fate butt mene | and yett contentt | k k t."

- and when a certain knight told him that the river was the Acheron, and the town on its bank Pandosia, For bi a reyn that fill that same niht, 1548  
 The ryuer wex[e] to a dreedful flood,  
 And nat fer then[ne]s, in the kyngis siht,  
 Vpon the water a litil touñ ther stood,  
 Which made the kyng chaunge face & blood; 1552  
 And specialli his pride gan attame,  
 Whan he wiste Pandosia was the name.
- he remembered the divinal of the priests and trembled in every joint for fear. And thanne he gan most dreedfulli remembre, 1556  
 Callyng to mynde the preestis dyuynaille,  
 Which made hym quake in eueri ioynt & membre  
 For verray feer[e], & his breth to faille.  
 No man koude hym wisse\* nor counsaile,  
 On eueri parti he stood so on the wrak: 1560  
 The flood toforn hym, his enmyes at his\* bak.
- He did not know which way to turn, with his foes close behind him, and the river before him. To take the ryuer he stood in mortal dreed; 1564  
 And yif that he his enmyes dede abide,  
 He wiste weel that he was but ded,  
 Passage was non for to turne aside.  
 Thus desolat he stood withoute guide,  
 Thouhte it bett to iupart the ryuer  
 Than with enmyes that folwed hym so neer. 1568
- and finally choosing the river as the lesser evil. Thre mortal dreedis his herte gan constreyne; 1572  
 Dreed of the flood[e] for to ha[ue] passage,  
 Behynde his enmyes, that gan at hym disdeyne,  
 List he wer slay[e]n in that mortal rage:  
 His fate approchyng, he but yong of age,  
 The touñ Pandosia the toknys ded expresse,  
 With Acheronte that bar therof witnesse.
- he was about to throw himself into its waters, when his most trusted man plunged a great spear into his back and killed him. And whan that he putte in auenture 1576  
 To passe the flood or ellis to be ded,  
 Whom he most truste of any creature,  
 Took a gret spere, squar & sharp the hed,  
 And at his bak, he quakyng in his dreed, 1580  
 Traitourli thoruhout[e] plate & maile  
 Perced his herte; the blood abrod gan raile.
- The Luccans cut his body into pieces, and afterwards an old lady begged that And as it is also of hym remembered, 1584  
 The Lucaynois be vengable violence,  
 Thei han his careyn on pecis al dismembred, —
1551. water] Riveer H. 1559. hym wisse] wissh hym B,  
 wisse hym H, R 3. 1561. 2nd his] the B— at his] atte J.  
 1568. with] with his H. 1569. dreedis] Deedis H.  
 1578. trustid H. 1581. Trayterously P.  
 1582. the blood abrod] about þe bloode H, R 3.

Til an old ladi beyng in presence  
 Requered them of humble pacience,  
 That she of grace gadre myhte anon . 1588  
 His membris alle & ioyne hem into oon,  
 Afftir to sende hem onto his suster deere,  
 Olympiades, the statli grete queen;  
 That of affecciou<sup>n</sup> & loue most enteere, 1592  
 When it befell that she dede hem seen,  
 Sholde of nature, as it mut needis been,  
 Weepe, & prouide in his estat roiall  
 To burie the bodi with feeste funerall. 1596

Seeth heer exauple of this proude kyng  
 Which wolde ha scaped his fatal destyne;  
 Chaung of placis auailed hym nothyng:  
 Parodie of pryncis may nat chaunged be, 1600  
 The terme sette, fro which thei may nat flee.  
 For whan heuene of deth hath set a date,  
 No mortal man eschewe may\* his fate.

she might  
send what  
remained of  
him to his dear  
sister  
Olympias  
for burial.

Thus this  
proud king  
thought to  
avoid his  
destiny; but  
change of places  
auailed him  
nothing, for no  
man can escape  
his fate.

[How Darye kyng of Perce and Mede was outraied  
 by Alisaundre kyng of Macedoynne.]<sup>1</sup>

**O**N Alisaundre callid Epirothes 1604 King Darius III  
 Me list as now no lenger for to tarye, —  
 Slay<sup>n</sup> at myscheef, for he was rek[e]les,  
 Double of corage, koude chaunge & varie.  
 For turne I will my penne to kyng Darie, 1608  
 Which that whilom, who-so list take heede,  
 Most myhti regned in Perse & Mede.  
 And among other notable werreiours,  
 Lik as I deeme, bi heuenli influence, 1612  
 Onli be title of his predecessours  
 And thoruh his prudent roial excellence,  
 To gret ences of his magnificence  
 He had al Asie, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>, 1616  
 Vnder his lordshepe & domynaciou<sup>n</sup>.  
 And as my<sup>n</sup> auctour Bochas doth diffyne,  
 He was descendid fro the imperial blood  
 Of Artaxerses, & born eek of that lyne. 1620

had all Asia  
under his  
lordshap,

and, as Bochas  
says, was super-  
latively rich  
and descended  
from the  
imperial line  
of Artaxerxes.

1589. into] in till H. 1595. his] hir H, R 3.  
 1603. may eschewe B, J, P. 1604. On] In H, R 3, J.  
 1608. to] vn to H, R 3. 1618. Bochas] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 92 verso.

- Passed al princis of tresour & of good;  
 In Perse & Mede his gret empire stood.  
 An hundred prouynce, tencrece his\* puissaunce,  
 And seuene & thretti he hadde in gouernaunce. 1624
- He had power  
 over Egypt and  
 the Red Sea,  
 and deemed  
 himself lord  
 of all  
 earthly wealth.
- Ouer al Asie towar[d] the orient [p. 228]  
 His lordshipe laste, bookis make mynde,  
 And [he] hadde toward thoxident,  
 Ouer Egipt poweer, as I fynde, 1628  
 The Rede Se was nat left behynde,  
 Deemyng hymself, of al erthli treso[u]r,  
 Was non but he lord nor gouernour.
- His dominions  
 extended over  
 India, Parthia  
 and Armenia,  
 and worldly  
 folk thought  
 him the equal  
 of God.
- Toward Septemprion, vnder the mydday speere 1632  
 His poweer rauhte & his regalie,  
 Ouer Ynde, in cronicles ye may lere,  
 And to the boundis of gret Armenye;  
 Lord of the kyngdam that callid is Parthie. 1636  
 Worldli folk dempte hym with God egall,  
 Maister to Fortune, & she nat but his thrall.
- But for all his  
 wealth and  
 ambition,  
 Fortune assailed  
 him through  
 Alexander the  
 Great,
- But in his hiest exaltacioun  
 Of worldli glorie, he coude nat preuille; 1640  
 For al his richesse & veyn ambicioun,  
 But Fortune durste hym weel assaille.  
 In his most riche roial apparaille,  
 Cast in hir chaungis to yiue hym a sharp shour 1644  
 Bi Alisaundre, of Grece enheritour.
- and cast  
 him down from  
 his throne.
- Vnto purpos I will my penne dresse  
 For to declare & make menciou[n],  
 How proud[e] Darie in his most noblesse 1648  
 Was bi Fortune from his see cast doun.  
 For anon aftir the coronacioun  
 Of Alisaundre in Macedoyne kyng,  
 This was the processe anon of his werkyng: 1652
- Alexander made  
 no delay, but  
 set out at once  
 to conquer  
 Persia and  
 Media,
- He nat delaied nor maad no longe date,  
 In purpos fulli of ire to procede  
 Off Perse & Mede the sceptris to translate,  
 Al ther richessis to conquere & posseede, 1656  
 Perpetueli for tabide in deede  
 Vndir Grekis myhti obeissaunce,  
 In Macedoyne to haue gouernaunce.

1623. his] of B.

1627. he] om. H, R 3, J, P, H 5. 1635. Armonyne H

1643. riche] om. H. 1655. sceptre H.

- And as myn auctour weel reherse kan,  
 He sette in Grece the myhti strong cite,  
 Of Corynthe the metropolitan,  
 Ther testablishe his imperial see,  
*In regalibus* whan he list crowned bee,  
 As man whom God list of his myht to marke  
 The world to conquere, & be therof monarke.
- At the gynnyng of his conquest famous,  
 Throuhout Grece in euery regeoun  
 First he ches out of his fadres hous  
 Knihtis that wern most souereyn of renoun,  
 Notable in armys, & of condicioun  
 Feithful, trewe, which had of hih prudence  
 Forsiht in armys of marcial prouidence.
- To them he dede ful notabli assigne,  
 As men expert in knihtli apparailles,  
 To make his stuff with many riche signe,  
 And forge of steel his plate & his mailles.  
 Gaff hem the reule to gouerne his\* batailles;  
 For prouidence, of yore it hath be told,  
 Ful myche auailleth of knihtes wis & old.
- Al this acomplished, he list no lenger tarie,  
 This worthi kyng, but with his ordenaunce  
 Purposed to begynne on kyng Darie.  
 And, as it is put in remembraunce,  
 In most proud wise he gan hysilff auauance,  
 First in his weie to brenne & bete doun  
 Of hasti ire Thebes the myhti toun.
- Aftir, he gat too mihti regeouns,  
 The ton of Frige, the tothir callid Lide, —  
 Set bi old tyme wer ther fundaciouns  
 Vpon too ryuers rennyng ther beside,  
 Whos goldene grauell ther brihtnesse may nat hide.  
 Paceolus & Eryne men them call,  
 Richest off stremys, thouh men rekne hem all.

1660 and establishing  
his seat in  
Corinth

1664

1668 and choosing  
out the most  
renowned and  
loyal knights of  
Greece,

1672

1676 gave them full  
charge of his  
military  
preparations.

1680

1684 When all was  
ready, he set  
out against  
Darius, destroy-  
ing Thebes on  
his way

1688 and conquering  
Phrygia and  
Lydia.

1691

1667. Atte begynnyng H.  
 1675. apparaille H.  
 1676. many a H.  
 1677. of] be H — maile H.  
 1678. his] the B — bataile H.  
 1683. kyng] om. H, R 3.  
 1692. grauelis J, grauels P — may] myht H.  
 1693. Pactolus P.

- After win-  
ning Isauria and  
Pamphilia,      And of his conquest fether to termynē,  
He wan Isaurea, a prouynce wonder strong,      1696  
In Asia oon cheuest off the nyne.  
And Pamphile, a kyngdam large and long,  
He gat also, wher it wer riht or wrong.  
For wher that conquest haue any title of riht,      1700  
It passeth my resoun, my kunnyng & my myht.
- he hastened to  
Persia.      I took no parti nor me list nat tarie  
In this mateer, but for[th] I wil proceede,  
How Alisaundre hastid toward Darie      1704  
Tacheue his conquest of Perse & eek of Mede.  
But first he cam to Frigia, I reede,  
Into a\* cite, the name to specefie,  
Thilke daies it callid was Gordie.      1708
- Arriving at  
Gordium in  
Phrygia, he  
found a rich  
cart bound  
with ropes in  
the temple of  
Jupiter;      Aftir myn auctour afferme weel I dar,      [p. 229]  
Ther was a temple in Frigia, thus seith he,  
Of Iubiter, in which ther stood a chaar  
With ropis bounde, of stonis & perre;\*      1712  
Among[es] which men myhte behold & see  
A fatal knotte, be craff[t] maad so sotile,  
That no man koude ondon it be no wile.
- and it was  
said that  
whoever could  
untie the knot  
should be  
crowned king  
over Asia.      For who that hadde science or kunnyng      1716  
That corious knotte to losne or vntwyne,  
Ouer Asie he sholde be crownid kyng.  
And Alisaundre, as bookis determyne,  
Seyng this char knet with many [a] lyne,      1720  
And how it sempte a maner impossible  
To seueren it, which was indyuysible, —
- Alexander saw  
that the cords  
were so inter-  
laced that no  
man could  
loosen them, so  
he pulled out  
his sword      The chaar with coordis was so enterlacid,  
That richeli stood in Iouys tabernacle,      1724  
Which be his wit koude nat be vnbracid,  
Nother be crafft nor no soleyn myracle:  
Til Alisaundre, bi a dyuyn oracle,  
Drouh out his suerd, wherof men hadde wonder, 1728  
Carf the knotte & cordis alle assonder,
- and cut the knot  
through, and  
rode forth on  
his conquest.      Wherbi he wiste that he was ordeyned  
Ouer al Asie to be lord & kyng.  
Which to reioisshe (this stori is nat feyned)      1732

1698. Pamphilia P. 1699. wer] was H. 1705. to cheve H.  
1707. In ta B, J, R 3. 1708. callid] namyd H.  
1712. of perre B. 1720. a] om. J, H 5, P.  
1729. Carf] korve H. 1730. he] thei H, H 5, R 3.

He rood lik Mars his batailes conueyng,  
 Thoruh Perse & Mede his standardis displaieng,  
 Toward his conquest, wher I leue hym duelle,  
 And of this chaar & knottes I wil telle.

1736

Prudent Iustinus, an olde cronicleer,  
 In his cronicles reherseth this storye:  
 How [oon] Gordius, a poore laborer,  
 Beside the cite that callid is Gordie,  
 Eryng his lond dede his oxis guie,  
 Al maner foul that hath weengis fliht  
 Hih in the hair apperede in his siht.

Justin tells us  
 that Gordius, a  
 poor agriculturist,  
 once saw  
 all manner of  
 birds flying  
 1740 high in the air.

Vnknowe to hym the tokne what it mente,  
 With dyuynour[e]s cast hym to counsaile,  
 Callid augures, which hooli ther entente,  
 Knowyng the processe of such dyuynaille,  
 Wher it shal proffite or disauaille.  
 And at the gate of Gordie the cite  
 He mette a maide excellyng of beute,

1744 As he did not  
 know what the  
 token meant,  
 he went to  
 Gordium to  
 consult the  
 augurs, and met  
 1748 at the city gate  
 a beautiful  
 girl, who  
 had fore-  
 knowledge of  
 events, and told  
 him that he  
 was to be

Which from aboue, bi heuenli influence,  
 Hadde of hir birthe a maner know[le]chyng,  
 In such augurie gret practik and science, —  
 Which to Gordius expowned eueri thyng,  
 Saide of Asia he sholde be lord & kyng,  
 And regne ther duryng al his lyff.  
 In hope wherof she becam his wyff.

1752 lord of all  
 Asia, and,  
 hoping to  
 become queen,  
 married him.

Aftir his weddyng he wex fortunat,  
 The cronicle can ber me weel record:  
 Ther fill in Frige a sodeyn gret debat  
 Among the comouns & a mortal discord,  
 Knowyng no mene to brynge hem at accord,  
 Til ther goddis bi notable prouidence  
 Tauht hem a weie tappese ther violence,

1756

1760 After the  
 wedding a  
 dispute arose in  
 Phrygia, and  
 the people were  
 told that it  
 would continue  
 until they had  
 chosen a king;  
 and it was  
 shewn to them  
 1764 by miracle

How that debat sholde among hem laste  
 Vnto the tyme thei hadde chose a kyng.  
 And thei gan crie & preye ther goddis faste,  
 Bi sum signe or myracle out shewyng,  
 To yiue to them a maner knowlechyng,  
 That thei myhte, to ther notable encres,  
 Chese such on that sholde hem sette in pes.

1768

1733. bataille H.

1738. this] his H.

1758. his] this H.

1739. oon] om. J.

1769. to] om. H.

1746. ther] þe H.

- that they must  
crown a man  
whom they  
should meet  
riding in a cart  
to the temple  
of Jupiter.
- Thei hadde answer, tawaite & be weel war, 1772  
To sette espies bi besi attendaunce,  
On whom thei mette ridyng in a chaar  
To Iouis temple to doon his obseruaunce,  
And hym resceyue, bi goddis ordenaunce, 1776  
Vpon his hed, withoute mor taryng,  
To sette a crowne in Frige to regne as kyng.
- This man was  
Gordius, who  
after he became  
king ruled  
wisely and set  
his people in  
peace.
- And Gordius in his chaar ridyng  
Toward þe temple, thei on the weye hym mette; 1780  
And awaityng ches hym to ther kyng,  
And solempneli hom thei dede hym fette;  
Vpon his hed a riche crowne thei sette.  
And he to them so egal was & meete, 1784  
That [he] hem brouhte in reste & in quiete.
- He suggested  
that the cart  
be given as  
an offering to  
Jupiter;
- Thus to the crowne Gordius dede atteyne,  
Be toknis shewed onto his gret auaill.  
And ther discordes & stryues to restreyne, 1788  
He to his lieges gaff notabli counsaill,  
That thei sholde with roial apparaill  
[Go] take his char, as he dede hem deuise,  
And offre it up in most lowli wise 1792
- and to make  
it the more  
auspicious,  
it was placed  
in the temple  
before the  
goddess Grace.
- In the temple, that was consecrat [p. 230]  
To Iubiter, a ful solempne place.  
And mor to make ther offryng fortunat,  
Thei sholde it sette, withoute lenger space,\* 1796  
Tofor the goddesse that was callid Grace,  
Which bi myracles ther hertis to appese,  
Sett al the people in quiet & in ese.
- After Alexander  
had cut the  
knot and seen  
all the mysteries  
of Gordius' cart,  
he grew  
presumptuous
- And whan the kyng Alisaundre hadde 1800  
Loosnid the knotte, of which I haue you told,  
And of the chaar[e] which Gordius ladde,  
The secrees seyn & mysteries manyfold,  
Worldli presumpcioun gan make his herte bold, 1804  
Withoute title of any rihtwisnesse,  
The cite Gordie to spoille of his richesse.
- and robbed  
Gordium and  
all Phrygia up  
to Mt. Taurus,  
which is also  
called  
Caucasus.
- And al Frigie he robbed eek also  
Vp to the mountayn that callid was Taurus. 1808  
The which[e] hill hath famous names too;  
For it is also named Caucasus,

1778. to regne in Frige H.

1791. his] this H. 1796. space] date B.



- Wher this prynce most victorious  
Ordeyned first proudli with spere & sheeld 1812  
Ageyn kyng Darie for to holde a feeld.
- Vpon a mounteyn thei togidre mette;  
The marcial pleyn [was] named Horestes,  
And most proudli ther wardis ther thei sette 1816  
Al for the werre & nothyng for the pes.  
Wher Alisandre, in kniithod pereles,  
Al the Persiens batailed in his siht  
On Daries partie put vnto [the] fliht. 1820
- Kyng Alisaundre, shortli to conclude,  
In his most statli roial magnificence,  
Set nat his trust in no gret multitude,  
But in his knihtis, which longe in his *presence* 1824  
Hadde had in armis longe experience,  
Wer weel preued in marcial disciplyne  
Tenhauunce his conquest bi ther prudent doctrine.
- Which in that iourne han hem so weel born, 1828  
That in ther noblesse founde was no lak:  
For sexti thousand of footmen hem befor  
Thei slouh of Perse, & men on hors[e]bak  
Other ten thousand, so mortal was the wrak; 1832  
And fourti thousand, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
Wer prisoneres [take] & put to ther raunsoun.
- On Grekis parti, the stori doth weel shewe,  
Macedonoys on Alisandris side, 1836  
In comparisoun wer slay[e]n but a fewe;  
For of footmen & men that dede ride,  
Thoruh the feeldis, that wer so large & wide,  
Ther wer that day in al ther mortal stryues 1840  
Nat ful thre hundred which that lost ther lyues.
- Darie koude non other rescus make,  
Fledde at myscheeff in ful gret distresse.  
His wiff, his douhtre lad awei & take; 1844  
His tentis spoiled; his stori berth witsesse.  
Grekis made glad with ful gret richesse,  
His coffres spoiled, he fond no bet socour,  
And he enporisshed of al his hool tresour. 1848

1812. proudli] *om.* H.1815. was] *om.* J, P — named] *namy* H — Horestes] *Adrasties*

P.

1816. wardis] *werker* H. 1820. Daryus H.1824. his] *om.* H.

Taking refuge  
in Babylon, he  
knew not what  
to do,

Whan Darie sauh his dedli auenture,  
Ful pitousli in herte he dede mourne,  
And anon aftir this disconfiture  
To Babilon in haste he gan retourne, 1852  
And whil that he dede ther soiourne,  
Knowyng no recure to hym that myhte auayle  
With Alisaundre to holde mor bataile.

and sent  
letters and  
rich gifts as a  
peace offering  
to Alexander,  
upon whom  
they had no  
effect.

Than of purpos to sette hymself in ese 1856  
And for talegge his dedli fel greuauunce,  
In his entent kyng Alisaundre to plese,  
Cast for to sende hym lettres of plesaunce,  
Yiue hym giftes in ful gret habundaunce. 1860  
But al the sleihtis which Darius hath wrouht,  
Kyng Alisaundre set hem echon at nouht.

Proceeding in  
his conquest,  
Alexander visited  
the temple of  
Jupiter in  
Libya,

This manli kyng kept his conceit cloos,  
List nat shewe what he ment in deede, 1864  
But caste fulli aftir his purpos  
Vpon his conquest ferther to proceede.  
Aftir the getyng of Perse & eek of Mede  
To wynne Surrie, Egipt & Libie-lond, 1868  
Deemyng Fortune reedi to his hond.

and said that he  
was descended  
from the god,

And of his conquest ferther to endite,  
Whan his glorie gan most fresshli shyne,  
The temple of Iubiter cast hym to vesite, 1872  
Which stood in Libie, auctours determyne.  
Saide how he was descendid fro the lyne  
Of thilke god, bor[e]n to been his hair,  
As lord of heuene, fir, water, erthe & hair. 1876

and bribed the  
priests to  
deify him,  
forgetting that  
he was but a  
mortal man.

And that the preestis fulli sholde assente [p. 231]  
With heuenli goddis to maken hym egall,  
Gret richesse & tresour he hem sente:  
Thus dreed and mede made hym celestiall. 1880  
Falsli forgete\* that he was mortall,  
And of ambicioun, be marcial apparaille,  
Cast with Darie ageyn to ha[ue] bataille.

1857. talegge] tabrige H, ta legge J, talegge H 5, R 3,  
taledge P.

1868. Siria P — lyby & Egipt londe H.

1869. of Fortune H.

1876. fir water] watir fyer H — &] om. J, H, R 3, H 5, P.

1881. forgat B, J, R 3.

1882. marcial] mortall H.

- And, as I fynde, how thei dede mete,  
The[s] too pryncis *with* peeples innumerable  
In the confrount of the lond of Crete;  
And kyng Darye of folkes deffensable  
Brouht into feeld a peeples incomparable,  
Foure hundred thousand of fotmen fet fro ferre,  
With Alisaundre that day\* to holde werre.
- An hundred thousand ther cam with hym also,  
On hors[e]bak in steel[e] armyd briht.  
And alle this peeples, whan thei hadde ado,  
Al-be that day ful longe laste the fiht,  
Wer slayn & take & Iput to fiht.  
Wher Alisaundre to his ences of glorie  
Hadde of kyng Darie that day the victorie.
- And Persiens to ther fynal myscheeff,  
Withoute merci or payeng of raunsoun,  
With kyng Darie wer put to gret repreeff,  
Void of al hope & consolacioun,  
Fledde, as I fynde, into the regeoun  
Callid Partie, wher, as it is told,  
He of that peeples was take & put in hold.
- And thowh his feteres wern of gold maad riche,  
He hadde therof, God wot, no plesaunce.  
Fortunys giffthis be nat ay iliche,  
In hir fals wheel ther is such variaunce.  
Dyuers of cheer, straunge of hir contenaunce,  
Made Alisaundre with a litil noubre  
The multitude of Darie to encoumbre.
- Withyne a toun [called] Tharsa he was take,  
In [a] chariet, with cheynis stronge bounde,  
Of al his freendis pitousli forsake,  
Lad & thuruh percid *with* many mortal wounde.  
And this moordre contryued was and founde  
Bi oon Bessus, a froward rekles knyht,  
Which stood afforn most forthred in his siht,

1884 In the mean-  
time Darius  
collected a great  
army and met  
Alexander on  
the boundaries  
of Crete,

1888

1892 but again  
Alexander  
was victorious.

1896

1900 The Persians  
fled into  
Parthia, where  
Darius was  
captured

1904

and fettered  
with gold.

1908

1912 Forsaken by  
his friends, he  
was murdered  
by a froward  
knight called  
Bessus,

1916

1888. be felde H.

1890. that day] for B, J, P.

1893. this] his H.

1903. Parthye H.

1910. Alisaundre] of Alisaundre H.

1912. called] om. H, J, R 3, H 5 — Tharsa] Tanca P.

1913. a] om. J, P — I bounde J, ybounde P. 1915. many a H.

- who had sworn to be loyal to him. Yet before he died, Darius sent an old knight to Alexander, requesting him to have mercy on his wife and children,
- And was assured be feith of his legiaunce  
 To kyng Darie to be trewe in deede. 1920  
 But this fals traitour (God sende hym a myschaunce!)  
 Caused his woundis mortalli to bleede.  
 Yit or he deied he sente in al his dreede  
 A Percien kniht, sad & off gret age, 1924  
 To Alisaundre to telle hym his massage:  
 "Go thanke that prince of his hih noblesse,  
 Which of\* his grace & merci most habounde,  
 Hym list to shewe so gret gentillesse 1928  
 Vnto my wiff & childre, as it is founde.  
 For which to hym I am so moche bounde,  
 That he myn enmy, of his benigneite,  
 In ther distresse list haue of them pite. 1932
- and to condescend to have him buried as a king,
- And sithe I see that needis I mut deie  
 Thoruh bloodi woundis, which I may nat recure,  
 Sei Alisaundre, of grace that I preie,  
 For to ha[ue] routhe on\* myn auenture, 1936  
 Next to ordeyne for my sepulture,  
 And condescende to graunte myn axyng,  
 For to be buried as longeth to\* a kyng.  
 Praiyng the goddis which been inmortal, 1940  
 Whan he hath do to quiten hym his meede,  
 That of his merci most imperiall  
 Hym list of grace for to taken heede,  
 To burie me, kyng of Perse & Mede; 1944  
 For yif this fauour be in his herte founde,  
 To his noblesse the fame shal ay rebounde.
- and to avenge his foul murder.
- Requeryng hym of his imperial myht  
 Of myn foul moordre to seen ech circumstaunce; 1948  
 For moordre alway calleth to God of riht,  
 Neuer cesyng, but bi contynuaunce,  
 Vp to the heuene to crie for vengauce, —  
 Namli on moordre compassed & forthouht, 1952  
 Which bi auisement is execut & wrouht.
- After he had given this message to the knight, he died;
- And sithe I haue leid on the this bond,  
 To Alisaundre to do my massage,  
 And hym coniuere heer with my riht hond 1956  
 Tauenge my deth, wrouht bi gret outrage,

1921. sende] sent H. 1927. of] to B.  
 1936. on] of B. 1939. to] onto B. 1940. Immortal H.  
 1952. Namli] Namely whan H.

My blood out shad, *with* pale & ded visage,  
Heer bounde in stokkis, to goddis most benigne  
With riht hool herte my sperit I resigne.” 1960

Thus he lay stark, [for] ther was lefft no blood, [p. 232] and Alexander  
Lik as a-nother mortal creature. buried him  
with kingly  
honours.

Whan Alisaundre the moordre vndirstood,  
As ye han herd remembrid be scripture, 1964  
He dede ordeyne for his sepulture  
The funeral feeste holde in al[le] thynges  
As bi old tyme longed onto kynges.

### ¶ Lenvoye.

**T**HIS tragedie pitous for to heere 1968 This piteous  
Sheweth of Fortune þe chaunges lamentable, the lamentable  
Of roial tronis of gold & stonis cleere, changes of  
Fortuna and  
In worldli princis how thei be euer vnstable. the instability of worldly  
Hir\* fatal wheel most dyuers & chaungable, 1972 princes.  
With vnwar turn list nat hir cours to tarie  
To throwe hem down; record upon kyng Darie.

Who can or may be ful assured heere No one on earth  
To make Fortune to be so tretable, 1976 can be certain  
of Fortuna.

To fynde a weie or serche out the maneere  
Bi obligacioun to fynde hir vnmutable?  
Hir double face, the world ay deceyuable, 1980  
Shewe us ech day how falsli thei can varie  
Bi couert fraude; record upon kyng Darie.

Exauple how Phebus *with* his bemys cleer  
Sheweth sum morwe his liht most agreable, 1984 Like Phœbus,  
who often  
shews his clear  
beams in the  
morning and  
is clouded  
before night,  
so are the  
dignities of  
this world now  
flourishing and  
now contrary.

But longe or eue dirknesse ther doth appeere  
Thoruh cloudi reynes & mystes long durable,  
To us declaryng be toknes ful notable,  
Worldli dignites, now fressh & now contrarie,  
Can change ther tides; record [up]on kyng Darie. 1988

Thoruh all Asie, Perse, & Mede ifeere  
His lordshipe last, a thyng incomparable.  
To Ethiope vnder the mydday speere,  
Ful of tresour with gold innumerable, 1992 Darius ruled  
all Asia, his  
possessions  
were without  
number, until  
Fortune proved  
her might on  
him.

His boundis rauhte; Fortune eek seruisable

1970. tronis] throwis H.

1972. Hir] Ther B, J, R 3, H, H 5, Their P.

1975. heere] ay heer H.

1988. Can change ther tides] By covert fraude H.

1992. tresour] all tresour H.

Tobeie his lustis, til she gan falsli varie,  
Bi expert fraude to preue hir myht in Darie.

Noble Princes,  
though you sit  
on high thrones,  
remember that  
no lordship  
on earth is  
lasting.

Noble Princis, with hool hert & enteer 1996

Left up your corages, holdeth this no fable:

Thouh ye sit hih, conceyueth with good cheer

No worldli lordshipe in erthe is perdurable;

And sithe ye been of nature resonable, 2000

Among remembreth, as thyng most necessarie,

Al stant on chaung; record upon kyng Darie.

[Here Bochas remembreth the batailes and losse of  
Rewmys of antiquyte/ with the fallyng of diuers  
nobles.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas here  
reminds us of  
the great  
sorrows, the loss  
of realms, and  
the blood  
vainly shed in  
wars since the  
days of the  
Greeks and  
Trojans.

**H**EEER gynneth Bochas remembre in certeyn  
The grete sorwes, the mortal disauailes, 2004

The losse of reumys, þe blood eek shad in veyn,

Begunne of werris & marcial apparailles.

Cald to mynde of olde the fell batailles

Gunne of antiquite, as maad is menciouñ, 2008

First atween Greekis & them of Troie touñ.

It would make  
a compassionate  
heart bleed  
to have all in  
memory.

A pitous herte it wolde make bleede

To haue in memoire the dreedful gret outrage, 2012

As ye han herd[e], wrouht in Perse and Mede

Atween Darie and Alisaundre in ther age.

Eek atween Romeyns & them of Cartage

The woful troublis of werris first begunne,

Cause al the myscheuys that been vnder sonne. 2016

Kingdoms have  
been brought to  
ruin and laid  
desolate by  
dissension,

On outhert parti, who can remembre ariht,

Now losse, now lucre komth of dyuisioun,

Now disencres, now heuy & now liht,

Now lyff, now deth, for short conclusioun; 2020

For Bochas seith, such fals discencioun

Hath many kyngdam, that stood in good estat,

Turnid to ruyne & maad them desolat.

Troy and many  
a strong city  
in Greece and  
Persia, Rome  
and Carthage  
destroyed by  
the cruel rage  
of Mars.

Remembre of Troye the wallis broke doun, 2024

In Grece destroyed many strong cite,

In Perse & Mede gret desolacioun,

Rome dispurueied of marcial surete,

Castellis, tours of old antiquite 2028

2001. necessarie] transitory H.

2004, 6, 7. disavaile, apparaile, bataillis H. 2011. memorye H.

2015. troublis] trouble H.

2017. ariht] riht H. 2024. of] on H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 94 verso.

Maad ruynous in Affrik & Cartage,  
Caused be werris & Martis cruel rage.

Who list considren, wrouht bi daies olde  
The cours of conquest of thes werreiours,  
In Alisaundre he cleerli may beholde  
Bi remembraunce of his progenitours  
And of his blood, how al the successours  
Hadde fatalli, or thei dede hen[ne]s wende,  
A sodeyn deth or a shamful eende.

2032 Think of Alexander, his progenitors and his successors, how all came to a sudden or shameful death.  
2036

Ful many reknid that wer of hys lynage  
For to succede in his pecessiouns,  
To sexe & thretti partyng his heritage,  
To ech assigned ther roial porciouns.  
[And] first, as he made his dyuisiouns,  
He gaf of Frige the prefecture off riht  
To Leonatus, that was so good a kniht.

2040 His estate was divided amongst thirty-six heirs. Phrygia fell to the share of Leonatus,  
2044

But litil\* while last his pecessioun;  
For the contres list hym nat obeie.  
Thei of Athenys hadde indignacioun  
With Antipater, for he dede hem werreye;  
Yit in that werre, pleynli for to seie,  
Leostenes ther duk, ther gouernour  
Was slayn that day; he fond no bet socour.

[p. 233] but he soon lost his kingdom,

And Leonatus, that was his aduersarie,  
Of Antipater the parti to susteene,  
Fond Fortune that day to hym contrarie;  
For in the feeld thowh he rod armed cleene,  
With a sharp spere his wound was maad[e] greene,  
At myscheef slayn, myn auctour doth compile.  
Thus his lordship last nat but a while.

2052 and died fighting against the Athenians.

Antipater, another successour  
Of Alisaundre, as maad is menciou[n],  
Was be record the\* same fals traitour  
That for his deth[e] tempred the poisoun.  
His sone Cassander acomplished the tresoun,  
Bar the cuppe which that made hym sterue,  
With that strong venym whan he dede hym serue.

2060 Antipater, another heir, was the traitor who mixed the poison for Alexander.

2032. thes] be H.

2037. or] or els H, or ellys H 5. 2038. wer] was H.

2042. And] om. J.

2045. litil] a litil B, J, P. 2061. the] of the B, J.

He desired to slay all who might be suspicious of his treason.

Antipater, of this crym coupable,  
Gretli desired in his oppenioun  
Vpon al tho [for] to be vengable, 2068  
That likli wern tesprien his tresoun.  
Drad hym sore, hauyng suspeciou  
List he wer accusid to the statis  
Of crym callid *Illese magestatis*. 2072

His son presented the fatal cup to Alexander, and yet Alexander had made him prefect of Caria.

His sone assentid to that horrible deede,  
Which to Alisaundre, beyng in Babiloun,  
Most traitourli, withoute shame or dreede,  
As ye han herd, presentid the poisoun. 2076  
And yit the kyng, as maad is menciou  
Thouh he to hym fals was & contrarie,  
He made hym prefect, lord of the lond of Carie.

There were many notable warriors among the heirs: some slew one another in battle;

And among other notable werreiours, 2080  
Ther wer thre mo, ful worthi & famous,  
Set in the noumbre of his enheritours,  
Policarpus & Neptoloniou.  
And ech of them to other envious, 2084  
Withynne a feeld, the stori doth us lere,  
Euerich slouh other as thei mette ifeere.

Perdiccas, perhaps the best knight of all, was given Macedonia when Alexander lay dying;

Of Perdiccas\* what sholde I write or seyn? —  
Which amonge alle was oon the beste kniht, 2088  
That whan Alisaundre lay deieng in certeyn,  
And gan to feeble of his force & myht,  
Dempte afforn that it sat weel of riht,  
How this Perdiccas, for wisdam & manheede, 2092  
In Macedoyne sholde aftir hym succede.  
And onto hym with cheer & look benigne,  
Vpon his hed for seeknesse compleynyng,  
With ful hool herte for a notable signe, 2096  
Of successioun he gaff to hym a ryng,  
Aftir his day to be crowned kyng  
Of Macedoyne, sithe he myhte most\* auaille,  
Thoruh al his empire to haue the gouernaile. 2100

and yet, although he surpassed all his comrades in prudence and strength, vicious pride so turned his head,

And yit seith Bochas breeffli in sentence,  
Thouh he of knihthod & [of] hih prowesse,  
Of manli force & also of prudence  
Passed al other, the stori berth witnessse, 2104

2068. for to] that J.

2080. notable] nat al H. 2087. Prediccas B.

2099. most myhte B.

2102. and of] om. P.



Bi vicious pride & froward boistousnesse  
He was mor hyndred, thoruh his owne outrage,  
Than al his enmyes myhte doon to hym damage.

For thoruh his pride & gret extorsions,  
Fro Macedoyne the peple of that contre  
Fledde into other straunge regeouns.  
And of presumpcioun, the stori seith, how he  
Began a werre ageyn kyng Tholome,  
Wher he was slayn in alle mennys sihtis,  
Nat of his enmyes but of his owne knihtis.

2108 that he drove all his people away through his extorsions, and, presumptuously beginning a war against Ptolemy, was slain by his own knights.

Eek Anaxarchus of Capadoce kyng,  
Which provynce ioyneth to Surrie,  
Touchyng the boundis, be record of writyng,  
Toward thorient the lond of Armenye,  
Hauyng too contres, Scilice & Ysaurie  
Toward Cipre, & a gret ryueer  
Rennyng amyddes with stremes fressh & cleer.

Ariarathes, king of Cappadocia,  
2116

This Anaxarchus, wher he was loth or fayn,  
In daies fewe hath his kyngdam lorn;  
For bi Perdicas\* proudli he was slayn,  
Off whom that I haue you told befor.  
Thus worldli princis, thouh thei hadde it sworn,  
For al ther lordshipe & domynacioun,  
Bi fraude of Fortune vnwarli be put down.

lost his kingdom in a few days, for he was slain by Perdiccas.  
2124

Amongis othir princis of that age,  
Vpon Alisaundre duely abidyng,  
Bochas reherseth, Amulchar of Cartage,  
Duk of that cite, bi record of writyng,  
Aftir the deth[e] of that worthi kyng,  
As ye han herd, Imoordred be poisoun,  
This saide Amulchar, reparyng to his toun.

2128 [p. 234] Hamilcar, duke of Carthage, one of Alexander's captains,

Was slayn in Cartage, shortli to conlude,  
Of cruel malis & conspiracioun

2136 was slain by the commons of his city.

Withyne that cite, of fals ingratitude,  
Whan he of knihtod fraunchised had the\* toun,—  
And natwithstandyng al his hih renoun,  
Whan he stood hiest in his felicite,  
He bi the comouns was slayn of that cite.

2140

2110. regeouns] naciouns H.

2115. Anaxarchus] of Ariarathes P. 2118. lond] lorde H.

2122. Ariarathes P. 2124. Predicas B.

2126. worldli] worthy H.

2134. be] with H. 2139. the] that B.

[How Eumenides was twies outraiyd by Antigonus/  
and atte last / deied in prisoun.]<sup>1</sup>

After Alexander  
had completed  
his conquests,  
he claimed that  
he was son and  
beir of Jupiter,

WHAN Alisaundre in his roial estat 2143  
Hadde al conquered, toform as ye ha[ue] herd,  
He lik a god, most pompous & elat,  
As souereyn prince of al this myddelerd,  
To take upon hym was nothyng afferd  
To cleyme in contres, a thyng that was nat fair, 2148  
Of Iubiter to be bothe sone & hair.

and this was  
one of the chief  
causes of  
idolatri.

On of the prynciples, who-so taketh heede,  
That first brouht in fals ydolatrie,  
Was thilke tyme that preestis for fals drede 2152  
His name with goddis gan to magnefie,  
And so to calle hym of feyned flaterie.  
And myd ther temples in Libie on a stage  
Of his liknesse thei sette up an image. 2156

It availed him  
nothing, for he  
died of poison.

But lite or nouht to hym it mihte auaille  
Ageyn his deth[e] for to doon socour,  
Whan the fell poisoun dede his herte\* assaille, 2160  
Which made hym fade as doth a somer flour.  
Of whos empire was non enheritour,  
Sauf in his deiyng, thus stood the woful caas,  
Tween sexe & thretti his lond deided was.

Before his  
death he lay  
on a couch of  
gold and named  
his successors.

And in his story ful pleynli it is told, 2164  
This departis[i]oun, to make it ferme & stable,  
He was leid foorth upon a couch of gold,  
To reherse be toknis ful notable  
Whom he dempte of verray soth most hable 2168  
Of al his princis, pleynli to discerne,  
Whan he wer ded his kyngdam to gouerne.

The first among  
them was  
Eumenes, and  
to him  
Alexander gave  
Cappadocia and  
Paphlagonia.

First ther was oon amongis al that pres,  
Next Alisandre the knihtliest[e] man, 2172  
The worthi duc\* callid Eumenydes,  
Whos hih renoun ful weel reherse can  
Prudent Iustinus, the grete historian.  
Ordeyned afform to gouerne reumys too, 2176  
Al Capadoce & Pafflogonie also.

2155. myddes H.

2159. his herte dede B, J, P. 2171. that] þe H.

2173. duc] knyht B, J, knight P — Eumenes P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 95 recto.

- His hih noblesse, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 In especial mor to magnefie,  
 Hym lakked nouht of comendaciou<sup>n</sup> 2180  
 That appartened onto cheualrie,  
 To hih prudence or noble policie,  
 Except thre thyngis, myn auctour seip the same,  
 A crowne, a sceptre & a kynges name. 2184
- But for that he al othir dede excell  
 Bothe of prudence & famous cheualrie,  
 It is remembrid, as summe bookis tell,  
 That ther wer summe [that] hadde therat envie; 2188  
 For whan Fortune list to sette up hie  
 Any persone alofft upon hir wheel,  
 Summe ar beside that like it neueradeel.
- Who halt hym euer upon hih mounteyns 2192  
 Fynt gret experience of blastis & of shours,  
 Offt is troubled with storm & wyndi reyns;  
 So of Alisaundre the proude successours,  
 Whan thei sat hiest shynyng in ther flours, 2196  
 Wynd of envie, Fortune heeld so the rother,  
 That ech was besi to destroien othir.
- On hillis hih it is an impossible  
 A man tabide withoute wynd or reyn; 2200  
 A thyng expert & verra[il]y visible,  
 Hih clymbyng up is medlid with disdeyn:  
 Pres hath envie, as it is ofte seyn,  
 And thoruh preferring of Fortune in estatis 2204  
 Is euer caused gret werre & gret debatis.
- This same thyng was weel expert & preevid  
 Among thes saide roial enheritours  
 Of Alisandre; for ech of hem was greeuid 2208  
 To seen his felawe regnen in his flours.  
 And thus atween these myhti successours,  
 Of fals envie ther gan so gret a striff,  
 That ech made other for to lese his lyff. 2212
- And as it is afforn maad menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Policarpus & Neptoloni<sup>us</sup> 2216  
 Bi a maner fals conspiraciou<sup>n</sup>  
 Ageyn Eumenides wer inli envious.

He was a knightly man, and until that time had lacked only a crown, a sceptre and the name of king.

Since he excelled all men in chivalry, some envied him,

and as most people who live on high mountains are exposed to winds and storms, so it was with the successors of Alexander: each did his best to destroy the others.

Not one of them could bear to see his fellow reign in peace.

[p. 235] Polyperchon and Neoptolemus conspired against Eumenes, who slew them both in battle;

2188. that] *om.* J. 2199. hillis] *hihtis* H.

2201. verrailly] *verray* J, P. 2203. offten H.

2213. R *begins again.*

2214] Poliperchon and Neptolemus P. 2216. Eumenes P.

- Of whos falsnesse he was suspicious,  
Til on a day, ther is no mor to seyne,  
Meetyng in bataille he slouh hem bothe tweyne.
- and this angered  
Antigonus,  
prefect of  
Macedon, so  
greatly For which[e] slauhtre proude Antigonus, 2220  
Of Macedoyne prefect & gouernour,  
Wex in his herte so fel & despitous —  
And was with-al a noble werreiour —  
With his knihtis dede hooli his labour 2224  
Ageyn Eumenides bi marcial apparaille,  
A feeld assigned, to holde a gret bataille.
- that he set  
out against  
Eumenes and  
forced him  
to take refuge  
in a castie, Made upon hym a proud disconfiture  
As thei metten armed briht in steel, 2228  
And thus Eumenides, of mortal auenture,  
Fledde at myscheeff into a strong castel,  
Wherof his knihtis liked nothyng weel;  
For as the stori pleynli maketh mynde, 2232  
That day he fledde & lefft his men behynde.
- where he stood  
destitute, and  
finally fled to  
Argyria, In which castel for he stood destitut,  
Fro thens he caste in al haste to flee;  
In his gret myscheeff to fynde sum refut 2236  
That tyme he drouh hym in-tastrong contre  
Sum socour gete auengid for to be,  
Callid Argire bi Greekis of entent,  
The Latyn corrupt of this woord Argent. 2240
- a country rich in  
silver, and after  
which the  
Argyraspides  
were named, Of Archiraspedes, a peepel that ther duelle,  
Ther name thei took afftir that regeoun.  
The which[e] lond, as olde bookes telle, 2244  
Hath of siluer plente & foisoun;  
For which[e] cause, bi old descripcioun,  
It took his name of nature & of riht,  
Because the soil lik syluer shyneth briht.
- a manly and  
prudent peopel,  
who had been  
of great help  
to Alexander. And of this ile, which hath so gret a pris, 2248  
As myn auctour maketh rehersaile,  
How the peepel be prouident & wis,  
Prudent in armys & manli in bataille,  
Bothe to diffende & proudli to assaile. 2252  
Which bi ther wisdam & circumspect counsaile  
To kyng Alisaundre stood in gret auail.

2217. whos] was R. 2225. bi] with H — Eumenes P.

2227. upon] on R. 2228. briht armed R.

2230. into a] in ta H. 2232. makith playnly H.

2238. Sum] So R — gete] to get R, to gete H, J, to gett R 3, to  
geat P. 2241. Argiraspides P.

- And Eumenides, oon of his successours,  
 As ye han herd[e], drouh to that contre,  
 Ther to fynde refut & socours  
 In his myscheeff & gret aduersite.  
 And with his woordes of gret auctorite,  
 His noble langage & his fair eloquence,  
 The people had hym in ful gret reuerence.
- And for thei wern manli & coraious,  
 Able tassemble bothe in plate & maile,  
 He made hem rise ageyn Antigonus,  
 Bi ther prowesse with hym to ha[ue] bataille.  
 But of fortune his parti gan to faille,  
 Wher thilke people, the stori tellith thus,  
 Hadde euer afforn[e] been victorious.
- Antigonus hath the feeld recurid,  
 That day his knihtis fauht lik wood leouns,  
 In furious teene, of corage assurid,  
 Brak ther tentis & ther paelounes,  
 Spoiled ther castellis, robbed ther dongouns, —  
 Wher that contre, vnwarli thus affraied,  
 Hadde neuer afforn in bataile been outraid.
- And of despiht this peeple rek[e]les,  
 Cauht in ther herte gret indignacioun  
 Ageyn ther prince, this said Eumenydes,  
 Which hadde hem brouht to ther destruccioun.  
 And al that peeple, of oon oppynioun,  
 Presentid hym, it was nat aftir longe,  
 To Antigonus, bounde in cheynys stronge.
- In this processe breefli to proceede,  
 At gret myscheef he deied in prisoun;  
 He fond no mercy, pleynli, as I reede,  
 For al his noblesse nor his hih renoun.  
 Yit of his manhod it is maad mencioniun,  
 Who that his stori list to looke ariht,  
 With Alisaundre ther was no bettir kniht.
- In his conquest eueri hour & space  
 He most cherished for his hih noblesse;  
 Aboue al othir stood most in his grace,  
 To helpe & releue folk in ther distresse,

There Eumenes  
 was well  
 received,  
 2256

2260

and persuaded  
 the people to  
 aid him against  
 Antigonus; but  
 2264 unfortu-  
 nately the  
 Argyraspides  
 were defeated  
 for the first  
 time in their  
 history, and  
 2268 robbed of their  
 possessions,

2272

2276 which enraged  
 them so that  
 they delivered  
 Eumenes up to  
 Antigonus  
 in chains,

2280

2284 and he perished  
 miserably in  
 prison,—

2288

2292 he who had  
 before  
 been  
 most cherished  
 by Alexander.

2255. And] *om.* H — Eumenes P.

2270. day] *om.* H. 2273. castell H.

Al-be that he deied in wrechidnesse:  
To vs declaryng the grete variaunces  
That al-day falle in Fortunys chauncis.

2296

## [¶ Lenvoye.]

Duke Eumenes'  
tragedy again  
shews the  
froward  
doubleness of  
Fortuna.

**T**HIS tragedie of Duk Eumenydes [p. 236]  
Sheweth of Fortune þe froward doublinesse,

How worldli princis þat be rek[e]les,  
With vnwar chaungis fallen in distresse; 2300  
And ther may been no gretter heuynesse,  
Aftir prosperite, nor no gretter peyne,  
Than aduersite which that is sotheyne.

There is no  
greater sorrow  
than sudden  
adversity after  
prosperity.

Grettest envie, wher is grettest p[r]es; 2304

Grettest await, wher is most richesse;  
And grettest ese wher is rest & pes:  
Wher most discord, most is heuynesse.  
And of al sorwe, sorwefullest excesse 2308

Is thilke sorwe that doth a man constreyne,  
Aftir prosperite aduersite sotheyne.

Where there is  
rest and peace  
is greatest ease,  
and where there  
is most discord,  
is greatest  
heaviness.

Pryncis in erthe, of power pereles,  
Which excelled al other in noblesse, 2312

Hadde in this world bi conquest most encres,  
As Alisaundre his stori berth witnessse.  
Remembre the\* fyn of al ther hih prowessse  
And the tryumphes to which thei dide atteyne: 2316  
Aftir prosperite aduersite sotheyne.

These powerfull  
heirs of Alex-  
ander ended in  
sudden  
adversity, six  
and thirty of  
them, all of  
whom had  
great  
possessions.

The stronge enheritour[s] which þat he out ches,  
Sixe & thretti, the noubre to expresse,  
Which hadde pecessioun of kyngdamys dout[e]les, 2320

Ech thyng obeyeng to ther worthynesse,  
Til Fortune thoruh hir doublinesse  
Shewed hir myht, vnwarli to ordeyne  
Aftir prosperite aduersite sotheyne. 2324

Noble Princes,  
avoid discord,  
envy and  
causeless anger;  
do nothing of  
hasty wilfulness,  
lest there be  
sudden  
adversity.

Noble Princis, tauoide al disencres,  
Among your-silff discordes doth repressse.

Beth nat envious nor irous causeles;  
Werkith no thyng of hasti wilfulness; 2328  
Lat discreicioun been your gouerneresse:

2297. Eumenes P. 2300. change H. 2301. ther] thei R.

2304. pres] pes J, peace P.

2308. sorwe] om. H — sorwefullest] sorowfull H.

2309. doth] om. R. 2315. the] ther B.

2318. enheritour R — he] be R, H. 2320. possessions R.

2327. nor] ne H.

For ther mut folwe, iff ye parte on tweyne,  
Aftir prosperite aduersite sodeyne.

[How queene Olimpiades for she delited in vices  
moordre and vengeaunce deied atte mischeeff.]<sup>1</sup>

**N**EXT in ordre to Bochas dede appeere, 2332 After Eumenes,  
Aftir the myscheef of Eumenides, Olympias  
The gräte queen, with a ful pitous cheer, appeared before  
Moodir of Alisaundre, Olympiades, Bochas.  
Born of the lyne of Eacides;\* She excelled all  
Among queenys, hir stori berth witnesse, 2336 other queens in  
Excellid al other of beute & richesse. beauty and  
wealth,

She was douhtir to Neptolonius, and was  
The myhti kyng of Epirothes, 2340 daughter of  
And hadde suspect how Neptanabus Neoptolemus.  
Bi enchauntement put hymself in pres It was  
Of wifli trouthe to make hir rek[e]les. suspected that  
But Bochas heer, for to saue hir name, 2344 Nectanebes had  
Writ but a litil of hir sclaudrous diffame. been her lover,  
but Bochas  
wrote litte of  
it.

This said[e] queen, riht fair of hir visage, She was  
Was firste brouht foorth in thilke regiouns, 2348 very fair, and  
Wher all the worthi of blood & of lynage called the lode-  
Heeld ther sceptris & ther riche crouns, star of beauty.  
Thoruhout al Grece with ful pcessiouns;  
So that this queen that tyme nih & ferre  
Was of beute callid the lode-sterre. 2352

But among al hir gret prosperite, Her joy was  
Hir youthe flouryng in most souereyn noblesse, turned to  
Hir ioie was medlid with gret aduersite, 2356 adversity when  
Whan Phelipp Macedo, to hir gret heuynesse, her husband,  
Was mortalli woundid in distresse, Philip,  
In Cithia bacerteyn nacioun  
Callid Tribalois, as maad is mencioun.

For in that contre upon a certeyn day, 2360 lost one of his  
Wher-as he fauht & dede his besi peyne eyes at  
To gete a cite, & at the siege lay, a siege in  
Scythia;

2330. ther] that R — ye parte] the party R.

2333. Eumenes P.

2336. Eacides] Gacides B, R, Gaades J.

2339. to] of R — Neoptolemus P. 2341. Nectanabus P.

2343. hir] hym R.

2361. fauht] fauh H. 2362. lay] late H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 96 recto.

And for thassaut dede his stuff ordeyne,  
 He lost vnwarli oon of his eien tweyne, 2364  
 That whan the queen beheeld his sodeyn wounde,  
 She fill for sorwe \* euene plat to grounde.

and her good  
 name was in-  
 jured by the  
 suspicion of her  
 adultery with  
 Nectanebes.

Another thyng, bookis speciefe,  
 Troubled hir fame bi gret heuynesse: 2368  
 The suspect sclaudre of auout[e]rie  
 Wrouht bi Neptanabus enchauntyng hir fairnesse,  
 The liht eclipsyng of hir hih noblesse  
 Be swift[e] report for to hyndre hir name, — 2372  
 What fleeth mor swift than doth wikked fame?

What flies more  
 swiftly than  
 evil report?  
 What avails  
 royal blood  
 against it?

In womanheede, as auctours alle write,  
 Most thyng comendid is ther chast honeste;  
 Thyng most sclaudrous ther noblesse tatwite, 2376  
 Is whan princessis of hasti freelte  
 Exceede the boundis of wifli chastite:  
 For what auaieth lynage or roial blood,  
 Whan of ther lyuyng the report is nat good? 2380

The voice of  
 alander once  
 raised is not  
 easily put down.

The hooli bed diffouled of mariage, [p. 237]  
 Or onis soiled may nat recurid be;  
 The vois goth forth & the froward langage  
 Bi many rewm & many gret cite. 2384  
 Sclaudre hath a\* custum, & that is gret pite,  
 Trewe outhur fals, bi contagious soun  
 Onis reised [up] it goth nat lihtli doun.

To make  
 matters still  
 worse for  
 Olympias, Philip  
 took Cleopatra,  
 wife of  
 Alexander of  
 Epirus, as his  
 concubine.

And to mor hyndryng of Olympiades, 2388  
 Phelipp from hir dede away\* declyne;  
 And of the kyng of Epirothes  
 The wif he took[e] to his concubyne,  
 Callid Cleopatra, pleynli to termyne. 2392  
 And thus in myscheeff to encrece hir trouble,  
 Ther fals auoutry gan to wexe double.

2363. ordeyne] ordey H.

2366. For sorwe she fill B, R — to] to the R.

2373. doth] om. J, P. 2377. freelte] cruelte H.

2381. diffouled] defoyled P.

2382. nat] om. H.

2383. MS. J, "nota de scandalo," in scribe's hand in red,  
 margin of leaf 96 verso.

2385. a] of B, J, R — &] om. H — gret] om. J, H 5.

2386. outhur] or H — contagious] a contagious R 3, H 5.

2387. up] om. R, J, R 3, H 5.

2389. away dede from hir B, J, R.



Off this processe write I will no more,  
Cause the mateer is abhomynable;  
For kyng Phelipp the bargeyn bouhte sore,  
As is remembred be cronicles ful notable,  
Slayn on a day sitting at his table,  
Ful sodenli or he took any heede; —  
Pausanias dede that cruel deede.

2396 Thus there was  
adultery on  
both sides, until  
Philip was slain  
at his table by  
Pausanias.

Of which[e] slauhtre folwed a straunge cas,  
As ye han herd, bi Pausanias wrouht:  
Olympiades ful glad & murie was,  
Heuy outward, hir herte void of thouht;  
Yit feynngli she hath out weies souht  
For hym to holde solempne & roiall  
Lik Greekis rihtis a feeste funerall.

2400  
  
2404 Olympias'  
sorrow was  
feigned;

Aftir whos deth, wrouht of gret cruelte,  
Kyng Alisaundre maad no lenger let,  
Made Pausanias taken for to bee  
And to been hangid upon an hih gibet,  
Vpon whos hed ther was a crowne set  
Of gold & perle & riche stonis Inde  
Be Olympiades, in story as I fynde.

2408  
  
2412 and when  
her son  
Alexander  
hanged  
Pausanias,  
she set a  
rich crown on  
his head,

For he stood gretli in the queenis grace;  
And as folke dempte of suspecioun,  
Thei mette togidre in many preve place,  
Which gretli turned to hir confusioun;  
For noise aroos thoruh al that regeoun,  
That be thoccaseioun of ther misleuyng,  
How Pausanias slouh Phelipp the kyng.

2416 for he had  
been her lover  
and stood high  
in her favour.  
This caused  
still more  
scandal.

But she anon in hir malis feruent  
Fro the gebet made hym be take doun,  
Made his bodi solempneli be brent,  
Kept his exequies with gret oblacioun\*  
Aftir the rihtis of that regeoun,  
Nat left behynde in parti nor in all  
That appartened to feestis funerall.

2424 She then had  
him taken down  
from the  
gallows, and his  
body was burnt  
with royal  
ceremonies

Vpon kyng Phelipp, as it wer for the nonys  
To doon hir lord a shame & [a] despiht,  
Solempneli she made brenne the bonis

2428  
  
2432 on that of King  
Philip, to do  
her lord a shame  
and a despite.

2396. is] is so H.

2417. as] om. R. 2420. thoruh] thoruhout H.

2424. be] to be R. 2425. be] to be R.

2426. exequias R — oblacioun B. 2431. a] om. R.

- Of Pausanias, for a fals appetit, —  
 Vnto no man she hadde so gret delite;\*  
 For which this feste was lik in alle thynges  
 To thexequies of princis & of kynges. 2436
- She also made an offering to Apollo of the sword with which he killed Philip. She made his suerd[e] also to be take,  
 With which he slouh Phelipp the grete kyng,  
 Offrid it up onli for his sake  
 Toform Appollo, be record of writyng. 2440  
 Which to hir was sclaudre & gret hyndryng,  
 Caused folk deeme in ther entent,  
 To slen kyng Phelipp how she was of assent.
- All her pleasure was set on cruelty. She caused Cleopatra to hang herself and murdered her daughter. To been cruel was set al hir plesauunce: 2444  
 For merciles, void of al pite,  
 On Cleopatre causyng this vengauunce,  
 That she hirsilff[e] heeng upon a tre;  
 Moordrid hir douhtir, the stori ye may see. 2448  
 What malis may, yif it be declared,  
 Vnto the malis of wommen be compared?
- No malice can be compared to the malice of women. One in a thousand may be virtuous, one in two thousand merciful; and when enraged, no tiger is more cruel. I speke of them that be malicious  
 And list of custum for to be vengable: 2452  
 Among a thousand oon may be vertuous,  
 And in too thousand sum oon is merciabile;  
 But whan thei been of rancour vntretable,  
 Ther is no tigre mor cruel dout[e]les, 2456  
 Record I take off Olympiades.
- Olympias thought herself strong because Alexander had conquered Persia; And she of malis was mor set affire  
 Texecute boldli hir vengauunce,  
 Bi thoccasioun of the gret empire 2460  
 Of Perse & Mede, ful famous in substaunce,  
 Which stood be conquest vnder the gouernaunce  
 Of Alisaundre, wherbi she thouhte hir strong  
 Tacheve ech thyng, wher it wer\* riht or wrong. 2464
- but Alexander was poisoned in Babylon. Dempte hir poweer sholde ay contune [p. 238]  
 Bi the mene of his hih mageste.  
 God is strengre than the queen Fortune,  
 Which suffred hir sone in his most dignite 2468  
 In Babiloyne poisoued for to bee,  
 As is remembred in many old histories,  
 Aftir his tryumphes & [al] his gret victories.

2434. delite] despiht B, R, J, P. 2436. To] of H.

2454. is] may be H. 2459. Texecute] Execute R.

2464. wher] whether P — wer] be B, R, J, P, H 5.

2465. ay] ay wey R. 2471. al] om. P — gret] om. R, J, hih H.

- But for to passe breefli by\* writyng,  
 Touchyng this queen, as maad is menciouñ,  
 Whan ded was Phelipp, the famous myhti kyng,  
 She hadde off Macedoyne ful pcessioun,  
 And gouerned that myhti regioun,  
 Wher lik a woluesse, as auctours of hir write,  
 To shede blood she gan hirsilff delite.
- In hir tirannye most feruent & irous,  
 Reioisshe in slauhtre & to see men bleede;  
 For serpent non was mor malicious  
 Than was this queen, in bookis ye may reede.  
 Yit afftir al this she resceyued hir meede;  
 For thowh Fortune faouered hir a while,  
 Yit with hir treynes she koude hir weel begile.
- The eende of tirauntis & eek of tiraunessis,  
 And of moordreris, be thei neuer so wood,  
 Of poisounmongeris & enchaunteressis,  
 Of fals supplantours, contrarie to all good,  
 And of conspireres & them that thriste blood, —  
 Alle thes muste han bi Goddis purueyaunce  
 Heer short liff or sodenli vengauce.
- In Macedoyne this queen was most behatid  
 For hir vengable mortal oppressioun;  
 And Cassander ageyn hir hath debatid  
 And gunne a werre upon hir regeoun,  
 Which Talisaundre mynystrid the poisoun,  
 As ye han herd, afforn of hym deuised,  
 Bi Antipater most mortalli practised.
- She fond no reffut, but took hir to the fiht,  
 This cruel queen, this Olympiades,  
 Into a mownteyn that stood ferr out of siht;  
 And of hir kyn ther folwed hir gret pres,  
 Supposyng talyued ther in pes.  
 For on that hill stood a gret dongoun,  
 Strongli walled abouten enviroun,
- Which that marchid to a gret cite  
 Callid Epidna, stonyng in gret doute,  
 Because Cassander of old enmyte

2472 She governed  
Macedonia  
like a woluesse.

2476

2480 No serpent  
was more  
malicious.

2484

2488 Tyrants and  
tyrannesses,  
poisonmongers  
and enchan-  
tresses have  
short lives.

2492

2496 She was  
hated in  
Macedon,  
and when  
Cassander  
made war  
on her,

2500 she fled to  
a mountain  
stronghold

2504

2508 near Epidna,  
where she was  
besieged by  
Cassander and  
captured by  
treachery.

2472. by] the B, R, to the J.

2492. Heer] Outhir her H — or sodenli] on sodeyn R.

2496. hir] his R, a H. 2504. talyued] ta lyven H.

- Hadde for hir leide a seege [al] aboute.  
 And non was hardi for to issen oute,  
 Til Cassander, of fals compassed tresoun, 2512  
 Made with them a composicioun.
- Cassander assured her that she might live in peace,  
 His feith was leid that tyme for hostage,  
 Bi oth assurid to Olympiades,  
 Bi couert fraude vnder fair langage, 2516  
 To suffren hir with hym to lyue in pes.  
 But of his promys, he fals & rek[e]les,  
 For vnder trete, as maad is menciou[n],  
 The queen he took & cast hir in prisoun. 2520
- but broke his promise. Removed from prison, she faced her enemies with imperial courage,  
 But wil ye seen a roial hih corage,  
 How boldeli, delyuered fro prisoun,  
 She descendid, imperial of visage,  
 With al hir maidnes aboute hir environn, 2524  
 Hir enmyes present, wodere than leoun,  
 Seyng hir stonde so statli of hir face,  
 Whan thei wer proudest tareste hir & manace.
- attired for the occasion like an empress in rich purple and gold.  
 She was arraied of purpos for the nonys, 2528  
 As seith Bochas, in most statli wise;  
 In riche purpil, gold & precious stonis,  
 Lik an emperesse in the Grekissh guise.  
 Hir list nat fleen, the stori doth deuisse, 2532  
 With cry nor noise passed nat hir boundis,  
 Whan that hir blood doun railed from hir woundis.
- She did not try to escape, even when the blood flowed from her wounds.  
 She nat affraied in al hir mortal shour[e]s;  
 Void of al feer[e] list nat bowe hir chyne, 2536  
 Make no praieer to hir tormentour[e]s,  
 Nor no tokne of corage femynyne.  
 Vpriht she stood[e], list nat doun declyne,  
 Gaff evidence\*, as it is comprehendid, 2540  
 Of what lyne & blood she was descendid.
- She stood erect and shewed of what line she was descended. Never did a prince or princess die more proudly.  
 For vnto tyme that she gaf up the breth,  
 Was neuer sey[e]n prince nor princesse  
 That mor proudli took ther fatal deth. 2544  
 For as I deeme, hir marcial hardynesse  
 Cam from Bellona, of armys cheef goddessse;  
 Outher she hadde it bynfluence of corage  
 Youe bi the goddis to hire & hir lynage. 2548
2511. issen] isshu H. 2516. fair] fals H.  
 2531. the] ther H — Grekis R. 2533. nor] & H.  
 2536. cheyne R, cheyn H.  
 2540. evidence] Euidencis B, R, J, R 3, H 5, P. 2546. fro R.

Force is a vertu, bookis spesefie,  
 Ageyn al vices to make resistence;  
 But froward rancour & wood\* malencolie  
 Gaff hir a spirit of feyned pacience,  
 A fals pretence of hih\* magnificence,  
 Ascauns\* she hadde been in vertu strong,  
 For trouthe to haue endurid eueri wrong.

[p. 239] Power is a  
 virtue to resist  
 vice; but it  
 was perverse  
 rancour and  
 mad rage that  
 gave her a  
 2552 false pretence  
 of magnificence.

Contrarious force made hir despitous,  
 Strong in hir errour to endure peyne;  
 Of obstynat herte she was fell & irous,  
 In dethis constreynt list nat to compleyne.  
 Countirfet suffraunce made hir for to feyne;  
 Nothyng of vertu, pleynli to termyne,  
 Nor of no manerys\* that be femynyne.

2556 Obstynacy kept  
 her from  
 complaining;  
 there was  
 neither virtue  
 nor womanli-  
 ness in her.  
 2560

In hir entrailles al malis was enclosed  
 And al contagious venym serpentyne,  
 Nat lik a woman, but as a feend disposid,  
 Able to destroie al vertuous disciplyne:  
 Thus she began; thus she dede fyne.  
 In vicious moordre she dede hir ay delite,  
 Wherfor of hire me list no mor tendite.

2564 Her nature was  
 like that of a  
 fiend.

2568

### ¶ Lenvoye.

**A**LLE ye that shal this tragedie see,  
 Of routhe & merci hath compassioun,  
 To seen a princesse from hir imperial see  
 So vnwarli by Fortune throwe doun.  
 Of whos myscheff this was thoccasioun,  
 That in thre thynges was set most hir plesaunce:  
 In vicious lust\*, in moordre & in vengauce.

2572 Have com-  
 passion on this  
 princess, so  
 suddenly  
 thrown down  
 by Fortune.

2576

Alas, that euer the mortal cruelte  
 Of bloodi suerd bi execucioun  
 Sholde been appropriid to femynyte,  
 Ageyn the nature of ther condicioun!  
 Causing the fynal sclaudrous confusioun

2580 Alas, that  
 women should  
 be so  
 unnatural as to  
 draw the  
 sword!

2551. wood] proud B, R, J. 2553. hih] his B, hir R.  
 2554. Ascauns] As scauns B, J, As skawns R 3.  
 2559. constreynt] compleynt H.  
 2562. manerys] mannys B, R, J, R 3, H, mannes H 5.  
 2563. And in hir entraille H. 2565. as] like H.  
 2569. tendite] endite H. 2575. thynges] kynges R.  
 2576. lust] lyff B, R, J, life P — 3rd in] om. H, J, H 5, P, fals  
 R 3. 2580. the] om. H.

- Of Olympiades, heer put in remembraunce,  
For vicious lust, moordre & fals vengau[n]ce.
- The serpent  
hides under  
fresh flowers,  
and deep pits  
lie beneath  
crystal waters. Vnder fressh flours, riht soote & fair to see, 2584  
The serpent dareth with his couert poisoun.  
In cristal watres that calm & smothe\* bee  
Arn pereillous pettis ful of decepcioun.  
Men seen alday bi cleer inspeccioun 2588  
In feynyng facis angelik suffisaunce;  
Hid vndir-nethe rancour & gret vengau[n]ce.
- Though she  
excellid all  
in beauty,  
no princess was  
ever more  
savage and  
revengeful. Thouh she excellid of hir natiff beute  
Al othir princ[ess]is of that regeoun, 2592  
Was neuer sey[e]n feller non than she,  
To execute lik hir oppenyoun  
The pereilous treynys contreued of tresoun,  
And specialli in hir pompous greuau[n]ce, 2596  
Wher she hated, for to do vengau[n]ce.
- Noble Prin-  
cesses, be  
merciful and  
forgiving,  
temper your  
indignation with  
pity. Noble Princessis, set hih in dignite,  
Doth aduertise of discrecioun,  
In your most poweer & largest liberte 2600  
Beth merciable & doth remyscioun,  
Sugreþ with pite your indignacioun,  
Lat grace & merci tempre your hih puissaunce,  
Of Olympiades eschewyng the vengau[n]ce. 2604
- Cankered  
rancour does not  
belong to  
womanhood;  
and where  
mercy reigns  
grace abounds. Exilith rigour ferr out of contre,  
Yiue hym with you no iurediccioun.  
To womanheede longeth nat, parde,  
Of cancred rancour newe execucioun. 2608  
Wher mercy regneth, of grace ther is foisoun,  
Hath this in mynde bi long contynvau[n]ce,  
Of Olympiades forgetyng the vengau[n]ce.
- Let patience  
dwell in your  
hearts; Lat pacience bi vertuous plente 2612  
Withynne your hertis purchase a mansioun;  
Lat your compassioun attempren equite,  
That riht exceede nat the boundis of resoun,  
So that your femynyn humble entencioun 2616  
Be alway bridled be proudient suffraunce,  
Voidyng al excessis of rigour & vengau[n]ce.

2584. faire &amp; soote H.

2586. smothe] soote B, R, soot J.

2589. feynyng] femynyne H, H 5, femynyn R 3, feminine P.

2597. for] om. R. 2600. largest] lagest R.

2602. your pite with H.

For it is said of old auctorite,  
 To wommen longeth bi disposicioun  
 Meeknesse in langage, in port humylite,  
 In al vertu humble subieccioun,  
 Void of manacis, striff & contencioun,  
 So that no man in your attendaunce  
 Espie no tokne of rancour nor vengauce.

2620 for it is said  
 of old, that  
 meekness and  
 humility are  
 appropriated  
 to womankind.

The especial mene, the parcialite  
 Sholde of al merci be descripsioun  
 Rebounde to women; for of antiquite  
 The lamb nat vsed to pleie the leoun,  
 Nor no meek dowue envied the faucoun.  
 Nor to your sect, bi natural accordaunce,  
 Sitt nouter rigour nor hasti fel vengauce.

2628 The lamb is  
 not accustomed  
 to play  
 the lion, nor  
 does the dove  
 envy the  
 falcon.

This symple Lenvoie, resceyueth it at gre  
 And hath therof non indignacioun,  
 Lowli direct to your benignite  
 Onli of meeknesse & no presumpcioun,  
 Knowyng of kynde your inclynacioun  
 Disposed is bi natural purueiaunce  
 Vnto al merci, & nothyng onto vengauce.

[p. 240] Let this simple  
 envoy not  
 offend you, for  
 it is lowly  
 directed to  
 your benignity  
 by one who  
 knows that your  
 nature is dis-  
 posed to mercy.

[How Agathodes of lowe birthe born atteyned to  
 roial dignite/ ended in pouerte and wrecchid-  
 nesse.]<sup>1</sup>

I HAUE herd seid of ful yore agon,  
 A whirle-wynd[e], blowing nothing softe,  
 Was in old Inglissh callid a rodion,\*  
 That reiseth duste & strauh ful hih alofte.  
 And in thascendyng (it falleth so ful ofte),  
 Thoug it be bor[e]n almost to the skie,  
 Wher it becomth ther can no man espie.

2640 A whirlwind  
 used to be  
 called a rodion;  
 and when it  
 rises, no man  
 can say what  
 becomes of it.

2629. 2nd the] with be H.

2630. dowue] down (?) H — Facoun H.

2633. *This stanza is omitted in H.*

2636. no] none R.

2640. *The Explicit to Book IV and Incipit to the Prologue of Book V are misplaced here in H.*

2641. whorle wynde H, whyrwynd H 5.

2642. rodian B, other MSS. and P, rodion. 2643. That] And H.

2644. it] is H. 2645. to] in to H, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 97 verso.

Smoke often ascends mountain high; but just as often, when a sudden rain comes, it descends again.

Out of forgis bi fire þat smethis make,  
Bi cleer experience it is ful ofte seyn, 2648  
That thes infernal ougli smokes blake  
Transcende the copp<sup>e</sup> of many gret mounteyn;  
But ofte sithe bi a ful sodeyn reyn  
Al such ascenciouns, bi rage of wynd up blowe, 2652  
With vnwar tourn be reuersed & brouht lowe.

One of the greatest of misfortunes is when a low-born wretch is lifted to high estate.

And semblably to putte it at a preeff  
And execute it bi cleer experience,  
On the moste contrarious myscheeff 2656  
Founde in this erthe, bi notable euidence,  
Is onli this: bi fortunat violence  
Whan that a wrech[e], cherliss of nature,  
Thestat of princis vnwarli doth recure. 2660

A crown of gold is not suitable for the head of a knave, nor should a stupid clerk wear a ring.

A crowne of gold is nothyng accordyng  
For to be set upon a knauis hed;  
A foltissh clerk for to were a ryng  
Accordeth nothyng, who that kan take heed. 2664  
And in this world ther is no gretter dreed  
Than power youe, yif it be weel souht,  
Vnto such on that first roos up of nouht.

We do not set precious stones in copper; and the estate of political power is lost when knaves have governance.

Ther is no maner iust convenience, 2668  
A roial charboncle, rubie or garnet,  
Nor a chast emeraud of vertuous excellence,  
Nor ynde saphirs in cop<sup>e</sup> to be set, —  
Ther kyndli power in foul metal is let; 2672  
And so thestat of politik puissaunce  
Is lost wher-euer knaues haue gouernaunce.

They rise up like windy smokes; and a crowned ass is more to be dreaded than a lion.

For a tyme thei may weel up ascende,  
Lik wyndi smokes ther boistous fumys spreede. 2676  
A crownid asse, pleyntli to comprehende,  
Void of discrecioun is mor for to dreede  
Than is a leoun: for the ton in deede  
Of his nature is myhti & roiall; 2680  
Void of discrecioun, the tothir bestiall.

The lion is merciful to those who lie prostrate before him; the crowned ass is always cruel.

The gentil nature of a strong leoun  
To prostrat peep[e] of kynde is merciab;le;  
For vnto all that falle afforn hym doun 2684  
His roiall puissaunce cannat be vengable.

2648. often H.

2654. semblable R. 2659. a wrech] wrecches J.

2679. a] om. H. 2682. The] This R.



But cherlish wolues, bi rigour vntretable,  
 And foltissh assis, eek of bestialite,  
 Failyng resoun, braide euer on cruelte. 2688

Non is so proud as he that can no good,  
 The leudere hed, the mor presumpcioun,  
 Most cruelte & vengauce in louh blood,  
 Wher malepertnesse, ther indiscrecioun. 2692

Of cherl & gentil make this dyuisioun:  
 Of outhor of them I dar riht weel reporte,  
 The stok thei cam fro, therto thei wil resorte.

The rose knowe be colour & suetnesse,  
 And violettis for ther fressh tarage, 2696

The netle rouh[e] for his fel sharpnesse,  
 Thistlis, breeris prikyng bi gret outrage;  
 And thus considred the rote of ech lynage, 2700

Froward techchis been euer in cherlis founde,  
 Wher vnto gentillesse ay vertu doth rebounde.

Lat men bewar in special of o thyng,  
 How gret decepcioun is in fals coignage:  
 The plate may be briht in his shewyng,  
 The metal fals & shewe a fair visage. 2704

Al is nat gold, to speke in pleyn langage,  
 That shynith briht; concludyng of\* resoun, 2708

Vnder fair cheer is ofte hid fals poisoun.

For as a skie or an ougli cloude  
 Which that ascendith lowe out of the se,  
 And with his blaknesse doth the sunne shroude, 2712

That men may nat his gret[e] brihtnesse see  
 Nor haue no counfort of his cleer beute,  
 So vicious techchis, I do you weel assure,  
 Difface ful ofte the giftes of nature. 2716

God onto summe hath youen bi nature [p. 241]

For to excellen another in fairnesse;  
 Yit in vicis, be record of scripture,  
 Thei wer disclaudred, Bochas berth witesse: 2720

Outward sugre, inward bittirnesse.  
 Bi which exauple, to purpos I may call  
 Agathodes, fulfilled of vices all.

No one is so proud as a good-for-nothing; ignorance and presumption, impudence and indiscretion, go hand in hand.

The rose and the violet and nettles and briars are always true to their stock, and rudeness is invariably found in the line of churls.

We must remember that all is not gold that shines bright;

for vicious traits deface the gifts of nature no less than ugly black clouds obscure the sun.

God has made some men fair yet vicious, as was Agathocles.

2692. Wher] With P — malapertnesse R, J, R 3, malapertnesse H, malapertnes P

2703. bewar] ware R. 2708. of] on B, J, H 5, R.

2709. often H — hid] om. R.

2717. hath] as R. 2723. Agathocles P.

- If I were to describe his outrageous life, it would ruin the paper I write on. In this stori he kometh now on the ryng, 2724  
Which of beute hadde passyng excellence;  
But to declare his vicious luyung  
And to descryue his outraious offence, —  
Yif I sholde writen in sentence 2728  
Lik his demerites hooli the maneer,  
It wolde thoruh perse & blotte my paper.
- He was the son of a potter and too proud to follow his father's trade. Touchyng his berthe, of louh[e] bed descendid, 2732  
Sone of a pottere, the story ye may see,  
In no vertu I fynde hym nat comendid,  
Except nature gaff hym gret beute.  
Fostrid in myscheeff & in gret pouerte, 2736  
Hadde eek disdeyn, I can hym nat excuse,  
Of hatful pride his fadris craft to vse.
- Through his great beauty he rose to high estate, and although he was soiled by pride and unnatural vice, Bi the mene of his gret fairnesse  
To hih estat he cam fro louh degre;  
Yit in a vice which I wil nat expresse 2740  
He disusid cursidli his beute  
Ageyn nature, that euel mut he\* the.  
And soiled he was, shortli to specefie,  
With al the vici\* of pride & lecherie. 2744
- God allowed him for a time to be fortunate and govern nations. Yit natwithstondyng his fals condiciouns,  
God suffred hym to come to hih estat,  
And to gouerne dyuers naciouns,  
I fynde a while how he was fortunat, 2748  
In his lecherie ay pompous & elat;  
And in a cite callid Ciracuse  
The said[e] vices he frowardli\* gan vse.
- In Syracuse he had the command of one hundred knights And for he hadde beute & gret myht, 2752  
To alle vices his youthe he dede encluye,  
And koude also foorthre hymself ariht,  
Of elloquence expert in the doctryne.  
And, as is said, thouh he cam of low lyne, 2756  
Yit, as it is put in remembraunce,  
An hundred knihtis he hadde in gouernaunce.
- and purchased the office of centurion. Afterwards he was chosen a tribune and finally he was elected duke. Off centurien he purchacid an offis,  
And that tyme he took the ordre of kniht; 2760  
Aftir chose a tribun of gret pris,  
And gat gret fauour in the peepelis siht.

2727. offence] diffence H. 2742. he] thei B, R, J.

2744. vici] spici B, R, H, spices J, R 3, spyces H 5, spises P.

2751. he frowardli] frowardli he B, R, J. 2756. as] as it H.

And in this while, it fill so anon riht,  
 Of Siracusic he was maad duk & hed 2764  
 Bi eleccioun, because ther lord was ded.

Which with Siciliens heeld a mortal striff;  
 But Agathodes made hem\* victorious,  
 Took ther duchesse aftir to his wiff, 2768  
 Bi mene wheroff he wex ful glorious.  
 And in his glorie he greuh riht despitous,  
 Forgat hymself, thus growyng in estat,  
 Wherthoruh his cite & he wer at debat. 2772

His condicioun whan thei gan espie,  
 And sauh hym werke al of presumpcioun,  
 The peepel anon, knowyng his tyrannye,  
 Exilid hym out of ther regioun. 2776  
 In his exil, as maad is menciouen,  
 He coude fynde no bettir cheuisaunce,  
 But cam tacite that callid was Murgauence.

Wher bi his slehti sotil fals auis,  
 He so demened hym in the peeplis siht,  
 That of a pretor thei gaff hym an offis,  
 He meuyng them in al that euer he miht  
 Geyn Siracusic to make hem stronge & fiht, 2780  
 Of entent on them tauenged bee, 2784  
 Cause for his exil out of that cite.

But in [his] exil, the stori seith non othir,  
 It was so wrouht bi mediacioun 2788  
 Of duk Amulchar, that was his sworn brother,  
 Siracusanis off oon entencioun  
 Callid [him] hom ageyn into ther touen;  
 And ther he was restored to his place 2792  
 And reconciled to the peeplis\* grace.

And vnto hym thei gaf be gret auis,  
 Bassent of lordis & al the comounte,  
 Of a pretor newli an offis. 2796  
 For pretores of custom callid be  
 Officers that duelle in a\* cite,  
 And han ful charge bi doom & iugementis  
 To putte al gilti to peyne & to tormentis. 2800

He defeated the Sicilians and married their duchess, and, increasing in magnificence and power,

grew proud and quarrelled with his city.

His people exiled him to Murgantia, where he became a pretor and tried to stir up strife against Syracuse in revenge.

Duke Hamilcar persuaded the Siracusans to restore him; and after the reconciliation they also made him a pretor.

2767. Agathocles P — hem] hym B.  
 2773. condiciouns H — gan] did H.  
 2775. knowyng his] all of R.  
 2791. him] om. H, R, J, R 3, H 5, P.  
 2793. peeplis] kyngis B, R, J. 2798. a] the B, R, J.

- Armed with  
new authority,  
he caused all  
the senators to  
be slain. Than of newe this Agathodes, [p. 242]  
Because he hadde mor auctorite,  
Caste for to trouble the quiete & the pes  
Of Siracusic; & out of that cite 2804  
Alle the senatours grettest of dignite,  
Of mortal vengauce this tiraunt made anon  
Withoute excepcioun be slayn euerichon.
- and not content  
with that,  
pillaged the  
whole of Sicily  
and claimed the  
title of king. This hasti slauhtre wrouht bi tirannye 2808  
Miht nat assuage nor staunche his fel corage,  
Til he ther tresours took bi robberie,  
And al Sicile he spoiled be pillage.  
Cast of pride upon an hier stage 2812  
For tascende bi slehti fals werkyng,  
Of al that regeoun he to be crowned kyng.
- Put to flight  
by the duke of  
Carthage. Made his subgettis, maugre them, hym dreedyng,  
To calle hym kyng, and in especiall, 2816  
Oon the most worthi prince tho lyuyng  
That sat in chaier of mageste roiall,—  
Til Fortune shoop he muste haue\* a fall;  
For of Cartage the duk, a worthi kniht, 2820  
Fauht with hym twies & put hym to the fliht.
- he returned home  
in disgrace. Wherthoruh he stood in myscheef disespeired,  
And of al peeple he was had in disdeyn;  
To Siracuse in haste he is repeired 2824  
And to his cite retourned hom ageyn,  
Ther abidyng in dreed & noun certeyn, —  
For whan Fortune gan ageyn hym take,  
His freendis olde of newe han hym forsake. 2828
- and, collecting  
a new army,  
defeated the  
Carthaginians In that myscheeff he abood nat long,  
As the processe maketh rehersaille,  
Gadred peeple & made hymself strong,  
Onli in purpos al Affrik to assaille, 2832  
With them of Cartage hadde a gret bataille,  
Them discourtited, as Fortune list ordeyne,  
Bi hih prowesse of his sonis tweyne.
- with the help  
of his two  
sons,  
Archagathus  
and Heraclida. Artagathus Icallid was the ton, 2836  
Wonder delyuer, a man of gret[e] myht,  
The seconde brother, most worthi of echon,

2818. chaer R. 2819. haue] han B.

2831, 32 are transposed in R, but correction indicated.

2832. for tassaille H, R 3, H 5. 2834. discourtitéd R.

2836. Archagathus P. 2837. a] &amp; a B, H, R, H 5, R 3.

- Callid Eraclida, which in that mortal fih  
 Preued hymself that day a manli kniht; 2840  
 For bi ther manhod, in which ther was no lak,  
 Thei of Cartage wer felli put abak.  
 For thoh so were bi fortune of the werre  
 Agathodes hadde that day victorie, 2844  
 Fals couetise made hym for to erre  
 And eclipsed the liht of his glorie.  
 For as it is remembered in historie,  
 Lik as his berth, as it toform termyned, 2848  
 To al falsnesse his corage was enclined.  
 Cruel of custum, of herte merciles,  
 His will was lawe, wher it were\* wrong or riht;  
 Contrarie taccord, frowar[d] vnto pes, 2852  
 Proud & surquedous in his owne siht  
 Wher his poweer stretchid & his myht,  
 Lik a tiraunt natureli disposed  
 Texecute vengau[n]ce afforn purposed. 2856  
 He thouhte he hadde poweer for to bynde  
 Fortunis wheel for to abide\* stable,  
 Which is a thyng contrarie to hir kynde,  
 Whos propirte is to be variable: 2860  
 His pride, alas, was to abhominable;  
 For mortal prynce is non that may restreyne  
 Hir vnwar tourn nor hir cours sodeyne.  
 Bi influence of the heuenli sterris, 2864  
 The vnkouth cours aboue celestiall,  
 Bi Fortune, & fauour of the werris,  
 This Agothodes, of berthe but\* rurall,  
 Promooted was vnto estat roiall. 2868  
 Til pride, outrage & froward engendrure  
 Caused in his lordship he myht nat long endure.  
 Fortune of kynde is so flaskisable,  
 A monstuous beeste departed manyfold, 2872  
 A slidyng serpent, turnyng & vnstable,  
 Slep[er] to gripe; on whom ther is non hold,

Although he  
 was victorious,  
 covetousness  
 made him err,

and, true to  
 his low origin,  
 he became a  
 revengeful  
 tyrant.

He thought he  
 had power to  
 bind fast  
 Fortune's  
 wheel, the  
 nature of  
 which is to be  
 unstable;

but pride,  
 outrageous  
 behaviour and  
 low birth  
 caused him  
 to fall.

Fortune is like  
 a serpent,  
 slippery to the  
 grasp. There is  
 no hold on her.

2839. Heraclida P — which] with R. 2843. the] that R.  
 2848. 1st as] om. H, R 3, H 5, P — it toform] it toform is H,  
 R 3, it is toform H 5. 2851. were] was B, om. J.  
 2858. tabide B. 2864. influence R.  
 2867. Agathocles P — but] ful B, R, J, P, H 5.  
 2869. engendrure] aventure H, engendur R 3.  
 2870. nat] om. H.  
 2874. Slep[er] Slipir H, R 3, Sliper J, P, Slyper H 5 — non] no R.

- As in this book declared is & told,  
 Hir power preeued on princis rek[e]les: 2876  
 Record with other on Agathodes.
- Agathocles was  
 born in poverty  
 and rose to  
 royal estate;  
 his fall was  
 the more  
 grievous because  
 sudden. As ye han herd rehersed in sentence,  
 Symple & bare was his natyuite,  
 Brouht up & fostred in gret indigence, 2880  
 Out of a stok spryngyng of pouerte,  
 Roos to thestat of roial dignite.  
 The\* risyng vnkouth, merueilous tatteyne,  
 The fal mor greuous because it was sodeyne. 2884  
 From Siracuse he was exiled twies; [p. 243]  
 Vengable\* of herte wher he hadde myht.  
 Of Affrican[e]s disconfited thries;  
 Euer in bataile of custum put to fiht. 2888  
 Hadde an vsaunce to robbe day & niht,  
 And lik a tiraunt, ageyn conscience,  
 To spoile his subiectis bi rauynou violence.
- His two  
 sons were slain  
 in Africa; and  
 he became weak  
 in his limbs and  
 was stricken by  
 pestilence. Hyndred bi Fortune, wherof he was nat fayn, 2892  
 Hir strook ageyn hym sodeyn & violent:  
 His sonis two in Affrik were\* first slayn,  
 He of his lymys wex feeble & impotent.  
 With a consumpcioun his entrailles brent, 2896  
 And bi an agu, contynuel of feruence,  
 He was surprised bi strook of pestilence.
- He lost his  
 wealth, his kin,  
 his wife and  
 friends; his  
 victories were  
 forgotten, his  
 name eclipsed,  
 and he died  
 in misery. Al his tresour [Fortune] hath fro hym take,  
 His proude port & his worldli glorie; 2900  
 His kyn, his freendis & wif hath hym forsake,  
 His conquest dirk & put out of memorie:  
 His name clipped of al his old victorie.  
 And as he gan in pouert & distresse, 2904  
 So he made an eende in wrechidnesse.
- Men expect to  
 see a sudden  
 fall after a  
 rapid and  
 dishonest  
 ascent. Hasti risyng, & thrifft that is sodeyne,  
 And surmountyng bi violent rauyne,  
 And extort poweer, may for a tyme atteyne 2908  
 In riche chaier of lordshipe for to shyne.  
 Sodeyn ascendyng doth sodenli declayne;  
 And bi vntrouthe, wher-euer ther be encreas,  
 Men waite of custum a sodeyn disencres. 2912
2876. Hir] His R. 2883. The] Ther B, R, J, P.  
 2886. Vengable] Vengabli B, R, J, P. 2894. were] was B.  
 2895. Inpotent R. 2897. Agwe R. 2899. Fortune] om. R, J.  
 2901. &] his H. 2903. His] be H. 2904. &] & in H.  
 2907. rauyne] Rapyne H, R 3, H 5.  
 2909. chaier] chaar H — for] om. H. 2911. ther] om. R.

Of Agathodes men may example take,  
 What is the eende of eueri fals tiraunt.  
 Wrong clymbyng up doþ a foul eende make:  
 For a sesoun thouh tirauntis be puissant,  
 Fortune to them yeueth no lenger graunt;  
 But whan thei sitte on hir wheel most roiall,  
 Bi vnwar chaung to haue a sodeyn fall.

Agathocles  
 is a good  
 example.

2916

Agothodes was firste a symple man,  
 Brouht forth in myscheeff and in pouerte,  
 Sone of a pottere, his stori telle can,  
 Bi vicious luyng cam to gret dignite,  
 Of alle folk hatid for his cruelte,  
 Clamb fro pouert up to gret richesse,  
 Maad poore ageyn, deied in wrechidnesse.

2920 The son of a  
 potter, he rose  
 to great wealth  
 and dignity  
 through vicious  
 living, and died  
 in wretched-  
 ness.

2924

## [Lenvoye]

**T**HIS tragedie sheweth a figure  
 Bothe bi stori & bi auctorite,  
 How man and beeste & euery creature  
 Tarageth the stok of his natyuite:  
 Herbe of the roote, & ech frut of his tree,  
 For bothe of vertu & also of outrage  
 Folweth sum tech or tast of the lynage.

2928 This tragedy  
 shews how  
 euery creature  
 takes after his  
 parent's stock  
 for better or  
 for worse.

2932

Agathodes, bi record of scripture,  
 Born of lough bed, brouht foorth in pouerte,  
 Yit Fortune made hym to recure  
 Vp to hih estat from ful lough degre.  
 His resoun blent with sensualite,  
 Forgat hymselff, to speke in pleyn langage,  
 Thoruh a fals tech that cam from his lynage.

2936 Agathocles,  
 born of low  
 bed, rose  
 to high estate  
 and forgot  
 himself  
 in consequence  
 of his base  
 lineage.

2940

Ther is a difference of colours in peynture,\*  
 On table or wal, as men alday may see;  
 Tween gold & gold, atween bis & asure:  
 Al is nat gold that shyneth briht, parde;  
 Sum noble is fals that hath ful gret beute, —  
 Lat men bewar of countirfet coignage,  
 Techchis eschewyng of cherlissh low lynage.

2944 There is a  
 difference  
 between gold  
 and gold and  
 smalt and  
 azure. All is  
 not gold that  
 glitters,

2913. Agathocles P. 2918. most] *om.* H, R 3, P.  
 2922. his] the R. 2930. his] *om.* H.  
 2941. peynture] picture B, J, R, P.  
 2943. atween] tween R.

nor may a kite  
fly with royal  
eagles.

Sum man forthred of sodeyn auenture, 2948  
Set in a chaier of roial dignite,  
Wenyng his empire euer sholde endure,  
Neuer to be troubled with non aduersite:  
With roial egles a kite may nat flee, 2952  
A iay may chatre in a goldene cage,  
Yit euer sum tech mut folwe of his lynage.

Gentle blood is  
merciful, but  
boors are  
always cruel,  
following the  
nature of their  
churlish birth.

Gentil blood of his roial nature  
Is euer enclyned to merci & pite, 2956  
Wher of custum thes vileyns do ther cure,  
Bi ther vsurpid & extort fals pouste  
To be vengable bi mortal cruelte,  
Thoruh hasti fumys of furious corage, 2960  
Folwyng the techchis of ther vileyn lynage.\*

O mighty  
Princes, let  
Agathocles be  
your worldly  
mirror; avoid  
his example, as  
your royal blood  
requires of you.

O myhti Princis, your noblesse doth assure,  
Your passious resteth with tranquillite, 2964  
Seeth how ther is no mene nor mesure,  
Wher a tiraunt cachcheth the sureyntel  
Let Agathodes your worldli merour bee,  
Teschewe the tracis of his froward passage,  
As roiall blood requereth of your lynage. 2968

[How Cassander slouh the wif of Alisaundre &  
hercules hir sone/ and Antipater slouh his moder  
& of other moordres.]<sup>1</sup>

After the death  
of Agathocles,  
twelve men  
and women  
appeared before  
Bochas; and the  
first

THE grete myschevys\* of Fortunys miht, [p. 244]  
The woful fallis from hir wheel in deede  
Of princis, princessis, who-so looke ariht,  
Been lamentable & doolful for to reede. 2972  
But for al that, Bochas doth proceede  
In his rehersaile, remembryng thus hym-selue,  
To hym appered of men & women twelue.

was Bersane,  
wife of  
Alexander the  
Great.

Aftir the deth of kyng Agathodes, 2976  
Ther cam toform hym worthi queenis tweyne:  
The firste of them was callid Bersanes,  
And of hir myscheef gan to hym compleyne,  
Wiff to Alisaundre, the stori list nat feyne, 2980

2950. his] hir H. 2954. tech] om. H. 2960. forious R.  
2961. lynage] langage B.  
2963. resteth] wrestith H, R 3, H 5, rest P.  
2969. myschevys] myscheeff B, J, R, P — miht] aventure R.  
2974. thus remembryng H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 99 verso.



The myhti kyng, grettest vnder sunne,  
 Which bi conquest al this world hath wonne.

Wiff unto hym\* was this Bersanes,\*  
 Bi his lyue, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Which with hir sone, named Hercules,  
 Wer bi Cassander brouht to destrucciou<sup>n</sup>.  
 And of ther\* deth this was thocassiou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Cassander dradde that Bersanes the queen  
 Wolde with hir sone on hym auengid been

For his tresouns, which he toform hath wrouht  
 On Alisaundre & on his lynage;  
 And specialli, yiff that she were\* brouht  
 To Macedoine for hir auauntage,  
 With hir sone, that was but yong of age,  
 Cassander thouhte & dradde, as I haue told,  
 Thei wolde auenge his tresouns wrouhte of old.

He caste afforn\* of malis causeles,  
 This Cassander, most fals in his werkyng,  
 That yif this kniht, this yonge Hercules,  
 Sone of Alisaundre, bi record of writyng,  
 In Macedoyne wer take & crownid kyng,  
 How that he wolde of equite & riht  
 His fadris deth auengen lik a kniht.

Which thyng teschewe Cassander gan prouide,  
 And bi fals fraude was nat rek[e]les;  
 But on a day (he list nat longe abide)  
 Slouh first the queen, this said[e] Bersanes,  
 And thanne hir sone Icallid Hercules.  
 Thus bi Cassander, of moordre cropp & roote,  
 Thei moordred wern; ther was non othir boote.

This cruelte myht[e] nat suffise  
 Vnto Cassander, be record of scripture;  
 But lik a tiraunt in vengable wise  
 He dede hem burie, bi froward auenture,  
 Wher no man sholde knowe ther sepulture.  
 And thus, alas, which pite is to reede,  
 He moordred foure out of oon kynreede.

2984 She and her son Hercules were slain by Cassander, who feared their vengeance

2988

for his treason to Alexander,

2992

2996

Cassander did not want Hercules to become king of Macedon,

3000

3004

so he first murdered Bersane and then her son,

3008

3012

and, like a tyrant, ordained that they should be buried in unknown graves.

3016

2981. sunne] be sonne H.

2983. unto hym] to Alisaundre B, R, J, P—Bersanes] Bersabes B.

2987. ther] hir B, J, R, P. 2992. were] was B.

2997. afforn] of afforn B. 2998. fals in his] falsi B, J.

3011. cruelte] om. H—nat] nat enuh H.

- He gave  
Alexander  
poison and slew  
Olympias,  
Bersane and  
Hercules.
- To Alisaundre he mynistrid the poisoun,  
Slouh the queen callid Olympiades,  
And of hatreede bi ful fals tresoun, 3020  
As I haue tolde, he slouh queen Bersanes,  
Wif to Alisaundre, mooder to Hercules,  
Which in youthe, bi Bochas rehersyng,  
In Macedoyne was lik to haue been kyng. 3024
- Afterwards he  
killed Queen  
Roxana. another  
wife of  
Alexander, and  
her two young  
sons.
- Afftir al this he koude nat lyue in pes,  
But euer redi sum tresoun for to do,  
Slouh eek the queen[e] callid Roxanes  
Vpon a day, & hire yonge sone[s] too. 3028  
And she was wiff to Alisaundre also,  
Cassander dreedyng, in his oppenyoun,  
List thei wolde venge [hem] upon his fals tresoun.
- His wife  
was called  
Thessalonica,  
and she had a  
son, Antipater,
- Thus euer he lyued in moordre, sorwe & striff; 3032  
Bi weie of fraude cam al his encres,  
And, as I fynde, how he hadde a wiff,  
And she was callid Thesalonices.  
And as this stori remembreth dout[e]les, 3036  
A sone thei hadde born atween hem tweyne,  
To slen his mooder which aftir dede his peyne.
- who compassed  
her death be-  
cause she  
loved his brother  
better than she  
loved him.
- Shortly [to] passe, myn auctour writ non othir,  
Antipater was hir sones name; 3040  
And because that she loued his brother  
Bettir than hym, he, to his gret diffame,  
Compassed hir deth, the stori seith the same,  
Natwithstandyng tappese his cruelte 3044  
She axed merci knelyng on hir kne.
- With disordered  
garments and  
face bedewed  
with tears, she  
begged in vain  
for mercy.
- Hir brestes open, white & softe as silk,  
Al bedewed with teres hir visage,  
Requered meekli at reuerence of the milk 3048  
With which he was fostred in yong[e] age,  
For taue merci & tappese his rage,  
And taccepte goodli hir praieere,  
To saue the lyff of his mooder deere. 3052
- He was as  
revengeful and  
cruel as his  
father. No  
good branch  
springs from  
cruel blood.
- But al for nouht; he herde hir neueradeel: [p. 245]  
He was to hire, surmountyng al mesure,  
Lik his fadir vengable & cruel.  
I trowe it was youe hym of nature; 3056

3025. nat] na H. 3027. Roanes H, R 3.  
3036. as] om. J — this] the R, H 5. 3046. sofft & white H.  
3047. hir] off hir R. 3048. at] at the R.

For bi record of kynde & eek scripture,  
Seeld or neuer no braunche that is good  
Spryngeth of custum out of cruel blood.

Of hir deth[e] cause ther was non other,  
That Antipater slouh his mooder deere,  
But for she loued Alisaundre his\* brother  
Bettir than hym, the cronicle doth us lere.  
Which Alisaundre, yif ye list to heere,  
Hadde in his socour, I fynde be wrytyng,  
Demetrius, that was of Asie kyng.

3060 Alexander,  
Antipater's  
brother, was  
rescued by  
Demetrius, an  
Asian king;  
and after  
Lysimachus,  
3064

Thesalonices was in this while ded  
Bi Antipater, [s]he most infortunat,  
Bathed in hir blood, hir sides wer maad red,  
Withoute compassioun of hir hih estat.  
And hir too sonis lyuyng at debat,  
Til Lysymachus, that prefect was of Trace,  
Them reconciled ech to othirs grace.

3068 prefect of  
Thrace, had  
reconciled the  
two brothers,

Whan Demetrius knew of ther accord, —  
God wot the sothe, he nothyng was fayn;  
But bi his fraude, the stori berth record,  
That Alisaundre maliciousli was slayn,  
This while Antipater stonyng in nouȝ certeyn,  
Til he be sleihte of Lysymachus  
Was moordred aftir, the stori tellith thus.

3076 Demetrius by  
his fraud caused  
Alexander to be  
slain, and  
afterwards  
Antipater was  
murdered by  
Lysimachus.

To write the processe and the maner howh  
That Lysimachus bi fraudulent werkyng  
His sone in lawe Antipater thus slouh, —  
Fals couetise was cause of al this thyng;  
And Demetrius took on hym to be kyng  
Of Macedoyne, remembrid tyme & date,  
Whan bothe brethre wer passed into fate.

3084 Demetrius then  
became king of  
Macedonia.

Duryng this moordre & al this mortal striff,  
In this processe lik as it is founde,  
Of Antipater Erudice the wiff,  
Douhtir of Seleuchus, was in cheynys bounde,  
Cast in prisoun dirk, hidous & profounde;  
And for a while I leue hir ther soiourne,  
And to Demetrius I will ageyn retourne.

3088 During this  
time Eurydice,  
Antipater's  
wife, was in  
prison, where  
I'll let her  
remain, and  
return to  
3092 Demetrius,

3058. Seelden R. 3062. his] hir B. 3068. she] he J, R, H.  
3078. This] That R — no certeyn R 3, P.  
3086. Macedonye R. 3087. into] onto R.

- Which made hymself[e] to be crownid kyng  
Of Macedoyne, thoruh his gret puissaunce. 3096  
But to destroie his purpos in werkyng,  
Ther wer thre princis notable in substauce,  
Confederat & of oon alliaunce,  
Echon assentid, for short conclusioun, 3100  
To brynge Demetrius to destruccioun.
- against whom  
Ptolemy,  
Seleucus,  
Lysimachus and  
King Pyrrhus  
of Epirus  
formed a league. Oon the firste was worthi Tholome,  
Kyng of Egipt, in armis ful famous.  
Othir tweyne, the stori ye may see, 3104  
Callid Seleuchus, & next Lysymachus,  
And of Cipre kam the kyng Pirthus,  
Lord of [the] prouynce; & as it is eek founde,  
Thei made hem strong Demetry to confounde. 3108
- They deprived  
him of his  
kingdom and  
put him in  
prison, and, so  
far as I know,  
he never  
appeared again. Shortli to telle, with ther apparailles,  
Of Macedoyne thei dede hym first depruie;  
Cam upon hym with foure strong batailles,  
That he was neuer so ouer-set his lyue: 3112  
Take of Lisymachus, the stori doth descryue,  
Cheyned in prisoun, of his liff in doute,  
For I nat fynde that euer he issed oute.

[Off the too prefectys/ Penestes and Amantas.]<sup>1</sup>

- Peucestas of  
Babylon and  
Amyntas of  
Bactria  
NEXT in ordre Penestes dede appeere, 3116  
Whilom prefect of grete Babiloun;  
And with hym cam Amyntas\* eek ifeere,  
Another prefect, as maad is mencioum,  
Which Bactrie\* hadde in his possessioun,\* 3120  
A gret prouynce youe hym bi iugement,  
Mid of Asia toward the occident.
- were assigned for  
their worthinesse  
to watch over  
the safety of  
Alexander the  
Great. Thes said[e] tweyne, for ther worthynesse  
And for ther manhod in actis marcial, 3124  
Assigned wern bi dilligent bisynesse  
To waite and keepe in especiall

3101. Demetry H.

3106. Cipre] Epirus P — the] om. H — Pirrus P.

3107. &amp;] om. J, P. 3108. Demetrius P.

3116. Peucestes P.

3118. Amyntas] Amantas B, R, J.

3120. Bactrie is spelled Battrie in B, R, H, J, the c formed like t.  
— possessioun] suspecioun B, R, J — Bactrie] the Bactrians P.

3123. ther] the R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 100 recto.

Vpon the mageste in his estat roiall  
Of Alisaundre, for trust as chaumbirleyns, 3128  
Ageyn thassaut & dreed of al foreyns.

Afftir whos deth, for synguler guerdoun  
Made prefectis bothe thei wer in deede, Made prefects  
after his death,  
they were  
warred on by  
Seleucus and  
lost their  
provinces.  
As ye han herd; the ton in Babilon, 3132  
The tother of Bactrie, the stori ye may reede.  
Yit in quiete thei myhte hem nat posseede,  
For Seleuchus gan a werre ageyn [hem] make,  
That thei wer fayn ther lordshipis to forsake. 3136

[How Sandrodoctus born of lowe degre cherished  
robbours & theuys.]<sup>1</sup>

**O** THER prefectis ther wern also I fynde, [p. 246] There were  
other prefects  
who oppressed  
the people, and  
Sandrocottus,  
a man of low  
birth, who  
became  
Which heeld the peepel in ful gret seruage,  
In Macedoyne & in outhur Ynde, 3140  
Til Sandrodoctus, a man of lough lynage,  
Caste he wolde redressen ther outrage,  
Of entent poore peepel to restore  
To ther fraunchises, that pleynd on hem sore.\*

Sandrodoctus, auctour of this werkyng, 3144 king by craft,  
promised to  
restore them  
their freedom.  
But he did  
not keep his  
word.  
Behihte the peepel thoruhout al contres,  
Whan he be sleihte was c[or]ownid kyng,  
Them to restore to ther libertes.  
But whan he hadde rescyeued thes dignites, 3148  
Al his behestis, maad with a fair visage,  
Turned, as thei fond, to thraldam & seruage.

Thus whan a wrech is set in hih estat,  
Or a begger brouht up to dignite, 3152 No one is so  
proud and full  
of cruelty as a  
beggar set in  
high estate.  
Ther is non so proud[e], pompous nor elat,  
Non so vengable nor ful of cruelte,  
Void of discrecioun, mercy & pite;  
For cherlissh blood seelde doth recure 3156  
To be gentil be weie of his nature.

3133. of] in P.

3135. a] om. H, R 3, P, H 5. 3136. lordshipp H.

3137. wer ther also R.

3140. Sandrocottus P. 3143. on he so sore B.

3145. thoruhout] thoruh R — al] be H, of al P.

3146. corownid] crownid MSS. except H 5 corownyd.

3152. up] om. H, R 3. 3156. shurlych H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 100 verso.

For a time a churl may feign gentility, but like a serpent under flowers he will sting in the end.

He may dissymule & for a tyme feyne,  
Countirfete with a fair visage,  
Out of oon hood[e] shewe facis tweyne, 3160  
Contrari of herte, double of his langage,  
Stille of his port, smothe of his passage,  
Vnder flour[e]s lik a serpent dare,  
Til he may styng; & than he wil nat spare. 3164

Sandrocottus harassed his neighbours and created all manner of disturbances.

And euer lik of his condiciouns  
Was Sandrodoctus, set up in hih estat;  
Vexed peeples, troubled regeouns,  
Set cites & touns at gret debat: 3168  
• Whos gouernaunce was infortunat,  
As it was seyn & founde at al[le] preues,  
Cherished no man but robbours & fals theuys.

He came to be king through a marvel.

And to declare how he cauhte hardynesse 3172  
And occasioun peepelis to gouerne,  
Bi a pronostik, which I shal expresse,  
Riht merueilous & vnkouth to discerne,  
Which was this, as I shal telle as yerne, 3176  
Riht wonderful & vnkouth for to heere;  
And it was this, yif ye list to lere:

A poor man of India called Pracatales trespassed against King Venandrus, who sought to put him to death.

Ther was a man callid Procatales,  
Born in Ynde, which of his lyuyng 3180  
Was wonder poore, cam but seelde in pres,  
Because he hadde trespacid in o thyng  
Ageyn Venandrus, that was that tyme kyng,  
Comaundyng to sleen\* hym anon riht; 3184  
But he escaped, the stori seith be fliht.

But his swift feet helped him to escape, and while he slept in his weariness beside a well, a lion came and licked the sweat from his face.

God hadde youe hym of [his] feet suyftnesse,  
Bi mene wherof he saued hym fro daungeer,  
Thoruh long trauaile fill in werynesse, 3188  
And [to] refresshe hym, beside a welle cleer  
He lay slepyng, that face & al his cheer  
Dropped of soot; a leoun cam forbi,  
Licked his face, as seith the stori. 3192

When he awoke, the lion went his way to the forest without doing him any harm.

With which affray the man anon awook,  
And sodenli left up his visage;  
The leoun ros, sofftli his weie took  
Toward the forest, dede hym no damage, 3196

3165. euer] even H. 3170. at] in R. 3171. fals] om. R.  
3179. Pracatales P. 3180. of] in H.  
3184. sleen] fleen B, R, fien J. 3185. fliht] sleiht R.  
3186. his] om. R. 3189. to] om. R. 3193. awook] he woke R.

Forgat his felnesse and his cruel rage.  
Of which pronostik gan thoccaseioun  
Wherof Sandrodoctus took an oppynyoun,

Caste and thouhte in his fantasie,  
Sithe that the leoun is beeste most roiall,  
Which nat disdeyned hymselff[e] to applie  
To likke the face of a man rurall,  
In his nature to shewe hym bestiall,—  
He dempte as weel that it was sitting  
To take on hym thestat to be a kyng.

3200 Sandrocottus  
heard this story  
and thought  
that since a  
royal lion could  
lick the face of  
a rustic,

3204

His oppynyoun of resoun was riht nouht;  
For wher the leoun lefft his cruelte,  
He in contrary wex proud in hert & thouht,  
Void of merci, bareyn of pite.  
For whan that he was set in dignite,  
Brouht from a wrech to domynacioun,  
Ageyn nature he pleyed the leoun.

3208 there was no  
reason why he,  
another poor  
man, should not  
become king.  
Only instead of  
being merciful  
and gentle, he  
was proud and  
cruel.

3212

Sumwhile\* a leoun forgeteth his\* felnesse,  
Wher-as the wolff wil natureli deuoure;  
So roial blood hath routhe, of gentillesse,  
On poore pleyntiffs to helpe hem & socoure,  
Wher-as a tiraunt of nature doth laboure,  
Whan he hath poweer, cachchyng auantage  
To robbe [his] subiectis & spoille hem be pillage. 3220

3216 Sometimes a  
lion forgets to  
be fierce, but  
wolves and  
tyrants are  
always  
ravenous.

Sandrodoctus, thus born of low kynreede, [p. 247]  
In hih estat bi Fortune whan he stood,  
Gan make hym strong & vengable in deede:  
With noubre of robbours, furious and wood, 3224  
Cast hym destroie al the gentil blood  
That was in Ynde, & bi his ordynaunce  
Slen al ther prefectis that hadde gouernaunce.

Sandrocottus  
became strong  
with the help  
of robbers and  
the common  
people,

And with the comouns whan he was maad strong, 3228  
And gan the maner of ther deth deuise,  
Lik a fals tiraunt, al-thouh he dede wrong  
Ageyn his lordis whan he gan arise,  
An olifaunt cam in ful unkouth wise, 3232  
Hym obeiede, which was a gret[e] wonder,  
Whan ther batailes wer nat ferre assonder.

and, riding on  
a wild elephant,  
that, strange  
to say,  
obeyed him like  
a tame beast,

3198. begane H. 3205. as] om. J.

3210. & bareyn H, R 3.

3214. Sumwhile] Sumtyme B, R — his] al B, J, P, as R.

3216. of] on R, J, H, P, & R 3. 3223. vengeably H.

3231. gan] did H. 3232. unkouth] humble H.

slaw all the  
prefects and  
gentle blood  
of India.

Thouh he was wilde, the stori seith the same,  
Sandrodoctus leep upon his side, 3236  
And on his bak, as on a beeste tame,  
Toward the bataile anon he gan to ride,  
Was ther capteyn that day & ther guide,  
With his robbours, as it is maad[e] mynde, 3240  
Slouh al the prefectis & gentil blood of Ynde.

[How Seleuchus the mighty prince was slayn bi  
the grete Tholome kyng of Egipt.]<sup>1</sup>

After  
Sandrocottus,  
Seleucus, son  
of Antiochus,  
appeared  
complaining to  
Bochas. He  
was a favourite  
of Alexander  
and son of  
Queen Laodice,

**T**HAN cam Seleuchus to Bochas compleinyng,  
A mihti prince & a ful manli kniht,  
Sone of Antiochus, the grete famous kyng. 3244  
Which\* Seleucus, for wisdam & for myht,  
Was most faoured in Alisaundris siht,  
Born of a princesse, the cronicle ye may seen,  
Cald Laoudice the grete famous queen. 3248

who dreamt  
the night she  
conceived that  
Apollo gave her  
a ring

The berthe of hym straunge & merueillous:  
For his mooder upon the same niht  
That she conceyued drempte & thouhte thus,  
As it semed pleynli in hir siht, 3252  
Of gret Appollo, the heuenli god most briht,  
How she the tyme of hir conceyuyng  
Resceyued that niht of gold a riche ryng.

in which  
a precious stone  
with an anchor  
engraved on it  
was set. Apollo  
commanded her  
to give the  
ring to the  
child;

In which[e] ryng was set a precious stoon, 3256  
Youe vnto hir for a gret guerdoun,  
Graue with an ankir, hir comaundyng anon,  
Afftir the berthe withoute dilacioun,  
To yiue the ryng, of hool affecioun, 3260  
To Seleuchus, wherbi in especiall  
He sholde excelle in actis marciall.

and next  
morning, after  
her son  
was born,  
the ring was  
found in her  
bed, and she  
put it away for  
safe keeping.

The same morwe aftir the child was born,  
Withynne hir bed was founde a riche ryng, 3264  
With al the toknys rehersed heer-tofor,  
The anker graue, lik in eueri thyng.  
Which that the queen[e] took in hir keepyng,  
And of entent[e] for his\* auauntege, 3268  
Kept it secre til he cam to age.

3236. upon] on H.

3238. anon he gan] he proudly gan H, R 3, H 5.

3245, 46 are transposed in B and R.

3245. Which] With B, J, For R.

3263. the] this H. 3268. his] hir B, H, J, R 3, H 5, her P.

3269. to] till H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 100 recto.



- Anothir merueile befill also withall:  
 This [childe] Seleuchus (which was a wonder thyng)  
 Hadde enprentid eek in especiall  
 Vpon his thih an anker & a ryng;  
 So hadde all, bi record of writyng,  
 Such carectis, the stori doth termyne,\*  
 That aftir hym wer bor[e]n of that lyne.
- Whan Seleuchus, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 The tendre yeeres hadde of his age ron<sup>ne</sup>,  
 And cam to yeeris of discreciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 He bi this ryng ful many lond hath won<sup>ne</sup>.  
 Whos knihtli fame shon sheene as [a] son<sup>ne</sup>,  
 He weel auised, hardi [&] of gret myht,  
 Tyme of Alisandre holde oon the beste kniht.
- In werre and armes he his tyme hath spent;  
 Brouht al Ynde [on]to subiecciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Gat al the kyngdames nih of the orient,  
 Heeld hem longe in his pociou<sup>n</sup>.  
 But heer, alas, Bochas makth menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Al his victories, that dede in honour shyne,  
 With sodeyn chaung wer turned to ruyne.
- For whan Seleuchus was most victorious,  
 Hadde al Inde conquered in substau<sup>nce</sup>,  
 Atween hym & kyng Lysymachus,  
 Of whom tofor<sup>n</sup> is maad[e] remembra<sup>nce</sup>,  
 Began a werre & a gret distau<sup>nce</sup>.  
 And as thei mette with ther apparailles,  
 In a gret feeld ordeyned ther batailles,
- On Lysymachus fill the disconfiture.  
 Wheroff Seleuchus, glad in especiall,  
 Dempte his wynnyng cam nat of nature,  
 But bynfluence verray celestia<sup>ll</sup>,—  
 Gan wexe proud in his estat roia<sup>ll</sup>,  
 Nat supposyng in his victorious stall,  
 Of his myscheeuys that sholde aftir fall.

Another marvel was that an anchor and a ring were imprinted on Seleucus' thigh.

When he became of age he won many lands with the help of this ring

and conquered India and many kingdoms of the Orient.

But a sudden change turned all to ruin, when he went to war against Lysimachus.

He was victorious at first, and thought in his pride that no one could defeat him,

3271. childe] *om.* R, P.

3275. termyne] *determyne* B, R, P.

3278. age ron<sup>ne</sup>] *yers* Ironne H.

3281. a] *om.* R, J, P, *pe* R 3.

3282. &] *om.* R, J, P, R 3. 3285. unto] *to* R, P.

3289. that] *pe* H. 3290. to] *onto* R.

3300. nature] *aventure* H, *auenture* P, H 5, *auentur* R 3.

- and yet he was soon afterwards slain by Ptolemy, Lysimachus' brother-in-law. For as the processe declareth onto vs, [p. 248]  
 How of Egipt the grete Tholome,  
 Brother-in-lawe to Lysymachus,  
 Fill on Seleuchus bi ful gret cruelte, 3308  
 Slouh hym at myscheeff, the stori ye may see.  
 Loste his liff, as maad is mencioun,  
 In Macedoyne, the myhti regioun.
- Ptolemy was one of the heirs of Alexander and the founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty. And it is knowe of antiquite 3312  
 Bi rehersaile of these olde auctours,  
 That this forseid gret[e] Tholome  
 Was Talisaundre oon of thenheritours,  
 Kyng of Egipt, ther regnyng in his flours. 3316  
 Afftir whos name, descendyng doun be grees,  
 Wer alle the kynges callid Tholomes.
- He had three children, Ceraunus, Philadelphus and Arsinoe. As I fynde, touchyng his lynage,  
 Bi procreacioun he hadde childe thre: 3320  
 The firste of hem, to speke in pleyn langage,  
 Inamed was Ceramyus Tholome,  
 Next Philadelphus, a douhtir Arcynoe,  
 That weddid was birladres consentyng 3324  
 To Lysymachus of Macedoyne kyng.

[How the too sonys of queen Arcynoe were bi ther moders brother traitoursly slayn and she exiled.] <sup>1</sup>

- Arsinoe then came before Bochas, her face wet with tears, complaining her sorrowe. **A**ND thus remembred in bookes [that been] olde,  
 Deth of Seleuchus wrouht bi Tholome,  
 Vnwarli slayn, toform as I haue told, 3328  
 Next in ordre cam Arsynoe  
 To Iohn Bochas bi gret aduersite,  
 Al with teres bedewed hir visage,  
 And gan compleyne the constreynt of hir rage. 3332
- She had two sons, Lysimachus and Philip. This mihti queen, this said Arsynoe,  
 Hadde sonis tweyne ful famous of renoun:  
 The ton Lysymachus, excellyng of beute,  
 The tothir Phelipp, as maad is mencioun. 3336  
 And al hir ioie and delectacioun,  
 Hir worldli blisse — ther is no mor to seyne —  
 Was hooli set upon thes childe tweyne.

3320. children R. 3322. Cytomyus H.

3226. thus] om. H, R 3 — in] bi R — that been] om. R, J, P, H 5.

MS. J. leaf 101 recto.

- For bi thoccasioun of ther gret fairnesse,  
Men delited gretli them to see,  
Namli women, the stori doth expresse;  
And ther mooder, this queen Arsynoe,  
Stood in gret hope that thei sholde bee  
Mihti kyngis bi iust successioun,  
In Macedoyne the myhti regioun,
- Onli be title of ther fadres riht.  
Which to hir herte gaf ful gret gladnesse,  
For she dempte that non other wiht  
To succede sholde ha[ue] non interesse;  
But Fortune, the blynde fals goddesse,  
Disposed so for thes\* childre tweyne,  
That non of them ther purpos sholde atteyne.
- For whan ther fader Lisymachus was slayn,  
The saide queen callid Arsynoe,  
To saue hir lyff koude non othir gayn,  
But with hir sonis feerfulli to flee  
Into Cassandre, a myhti strong cite,  
Onli for dreed of oon Antigonus  
Which them pursued, the stori tellith us.\*
- But the brother of queen Arsynoe,  
Callid Ceramius rescued hir partie  
Geyn Antigonus, ye may the stori see;  
Yit in his herte he hadde gret envie,  
Al-be that thei wer nih of his allie,  
That hire too sonis sholde kyngis bee  
Of Macedoyne, & regne in that contre.
- For he was set onli of couetise  
To be crowned in Macedoyne kyng;  
And of fals\* tresoun, the stori doth deuise,  
Them to deceyue, this was his werkyng:  
First to the queen ful humbeli knelyng  
He made promys vnder gret surete,  
In Macedoyne she sholde crownid be.
- And hir childre, so fair of ther visage,  
Sholde be keped\* vndir gouernaunce  
Vnto tyme that thei kam to age.
- 3340 whom she hoped would succeed to the throne of Macedonia,
- 3344
- 3348 taking great pleasure in the thought.
- 3352
- 3356 But when their father was killed, Arsinoe fled with her two sons from one Antigonus, who pursued them to Cassandria,
- 3360
- 3364 where they were rescued by Ceraunus,
- 3368 who resolved to be king of Macedon himself, and slyly promised Arsinoe that she should be crowned queen,
- 3372
- 3376 advising her to keep her children in tutelage until they became of age.

3346. the] þat H. 3350. enteresse R. 3351. the] þat H.  
3352. thes] ther B, R. 3357. ferfull H. 3358. Cassandria P.  
3360. us] thus B, R, J, R 3. 3362. Ceraunus P — hir] his H.  
3363. þe story ye may H. 3370. fals] his fals B, R, J.  
3374. she] he R. 3376. keped] kept B.

- And for to put hir in mor assurance,  
 Ceramyus swoor (God yiue hym sori chaunce!)  
 He purposed, for al his fals werkyngis, 3380  
 To crowne hir queen & make hir sonis kynges.
- He swore before  
 all the gods  
 that he would  
 marry her and  
 make her his  
 queen,  
 Took alle the goddis ther onto wisse  
 And swoor ageyn[e], with a pleyn visage,  
 Onto the quen, of fraude & doubilnesse, 3384  
 His purpos was to haue hir in mariage,  
 Crowne hir queen to hir gret auantage.  
 Thus was he\* sworn, althouh he was hir brother;  
 Yit in herte God wot he thouhte another. 3388
- and thus assured,  
 she allowed  
 him to enter  
 the city, and  
 met him with  
 great ceremony.  
 Vnder colour of this assurance [p. 249]  
 She leet hym entre Cassandre the cite,  
 Cam ageyn hym to doon hym mor plesauce  
 With al hir lordis of hih & louh degre, 3392  
 Made the streetis hangid for to bee  
 With clothes of gold, & in solempne wise  
 To alle ther godis dede sacrefise.
- Her two sons  
 wore royal  
 crowns and  
 went before  
 her down the  
 principal street  
 to receive their  
 uncle;  
 And thus he was reseceyued solempneli; 3396  
 The day was halwed & holde festyual:  
 The queen for ioie ordeyned richeli  
 Hir too sonis, that were so faire in al,  
 To be crownid with crownes ful roiall, 3400  
 Goon afforn hire in the maister streete  
 Gloriousli ther vnkle for to meete.
- and with  
 a friendly face  
 he embraced  
 them, although  
 purposing their  
 destruction.  
 With felenous herte vnder a freendli face  
 This Ceramyus, roote of al tresoun, 3404  
 Gan his cosyns benigneli embrace,  
 Hym purposyng bi fals collusioun  
 To procede to ther destruccioun.  
 And fynali, firste he dide his peyne 3408  
 The queen textile and slen hir childre tweyne.
- He ordered the  
 queen to be  
 exiled, meaning  
 to murder her  
 sons; but she  
 saw what he  
 intended and  
 begged him  
 to be  
 merciful,  
 But or this tresoun was brouht to a preeff,  
 Whan the queen apparceyued his falsnesse  
 And sauh hir sonis brouht to such myscheeff, 3412  
 She coniured hym in hir mortal distresse  
 To haue pite of natural gentillesse,  
 Spare his cosyns, afforn hym wher thei stood,  
 Of roial merci, so nih born of his blood. 3416

3387. was he] he was B, R, J, R 3, H 5, P.

3396. solely R. 3411. apparceyued] parceyued H.

- And with a cri passyng lamentable  
 She fill afforn hym swownyng onto grounde,  
 Lik as she hadde be verraili coupable,  
 Seyng hir sonis bleedyng *with* many wounde. 3420  
 But al for nouht; ther was no merci founde.  
 For with\* ther blood (this stori is nat feyned)  
 Hir garnement was doolfulli disteyned.
- Hir faire face was soiled with ordure,  
 Hir goldene her was al to-torn & rent,  
 And lik a thrall this woful creature 3424  
 With mortal weepyng hadde hir sihte blent.  
 And aftir that, I fynde how she was sent 3428  
 To burie hir childre, for ther was no space,  
 Into an ile callid *Sammotrace*.
- Is any stori, whiche maketh menciou*n*  
 That a *princesse* of so hih degre 3432  
 Fond so gret cause of lamentaciou*n*?  
 She beyng douhtir to gret Tholome, —  
 Hir childre slayn be vengable cruelte,  
 And to beholde the deth most dolerous 3436  
 Of hir husbonde callid *Lysymachus*.
- She aftir banshed in exil made hir eende,  
*With* sorewful compleynt hir lyff thus drawe along,  
 Til into fate hir sperit dede weende, 3440  
 It is no dreed hir peynes wer ful strong.  
 And yif I sholde rehersen al the wrong  
 That she suffred, it sholde greeue sore,  
 Therfor of hir now I write no more. 3444

and fell to the  
ground in a  
swoon before  
him.

3420

3424 But all without  
avail. The  
blood of her  
sons stained  
her garments,  
her golden hair  
was torn, and  
she went blind  
for weeping.

3428

3432 She buried her  
sons in  
*Samothrace*.  
Is there any  
story of a  
princess of  
such high  
degree who  
suffered so  
much?

3436

3440 Afterwards she  
died in exile.  
It would be  
too painful to  
rehearse all  
her wrongs.

3444

### Lenvoye.

- T**HIS tragedie sheweth an apparence  
 And a liknesse of feithful assuravnce,  
 Texte men to yive fals credence  
 Vnto Fortunys froward variaunce. 3448  
 Which cast hir baitis & anglis of plesaunce,  
 An hook hid vndir of vengable cruelte,  
 As this chapitle [hath] put in remembraunce  
 Of *Lysymachus* & of *Arsynoe*. 3452
3420. many a H. 3422. with] which B. 3423. garment H.  
 3431. whiche] which bat H, R 3. 3437. callid] om. R.  
 3438. bansshed H, R.  
 3447. Textie] execute H. 3451. hath] om. R.

This tragedy  
has to do with  
the variance of  
Fortune.

3448

3452

- There is no greater evidence of worldly vicissitudes than to see princes suddenly brought to ruin.
- Is ther any gretter euidence  
Of worldli trouble of worldli constaunce,  
Than seen princis from ther magnificence  
And from ther myhti roial [hih] puissaunce 3456  
Vnwarli brouht bi Fortune to myschaunce,  
And ouerwhelmyd from ther tranquillite?  
Seep heer a merour ful notable in substance  
Of Lisymachus & queen Arsynoe. 3460
- The ring and anchor given to Seleucus by Apollo were of small assurance; and think of Lysimachus and Arasnoel
- The ryng, the anker of gret excellence  
Youe to Seleuchus for marcial suffisaunce,  
Whan Appollo be heuenli influence  
List with his mooder make his alliaunce, 3464  
Sent hym thes reliques of synguler aqueyntaunce,  
To sette his manhod in mor surete;  
But in al such quaueryng perseueraunce,\*  
Thynk on Lysymachus & on Arsynoel 3468
- Neither the vast treasures nor the subjects nor the regions of those who govern this world render them secure against Fortune.
- The vnkout[h] tresours, the gold nor the dis-  
pence [p. 250]  
Of hem that han this world in gouernaunce,  
Nor al the subiectes, up rekned in sentence,  
Nor al the regiouns vnder ther obeissaunce, 3472  
Princis, princessis, with al ther attendaunce,  
May ageyn Fortune yiue hem no liberte;  
Who nat knoweth hir vnseur geri chaunce,  
Thynk on Lysymachus & on Arsynoe. 3476
- Arasnoe and her children were slayn by Ceraunus (bad luck to him!) who pretended friendship for them.
- Hir childre and she slayn bi violence  
Of Ceramyus (God yiue hym sori chaunce!)  
That bi fals colour dide hir reuerence  
And pretendid a maner obseruaunce, 3480  
The tresoun cloos of venymous purueiaunce,  
Purposed afforn toutraie hem all[e] thre:  
The childre slayn, which knewe no cheuisaunce,  
The mooder exiled, callid Arsynoe. 3484
- Noble Princes, do not become estranged from one another or hide your rancour under a certain of duplicity. Remember this chapter of Lysimachus and Arasnoe.
- Noble Princis, beeth war of hih prudence,  
Among your-silf that ther be no distaunce,  
Hideth no rancour of hatful violence  
Vndir a courtyn of double daliaunce; 3488  
Lik your herte shewe out your contenaunce,  
Void of dissymulyng &\* duplicite,

3456. hih] *om.* R. 3460. queen] of R. 3464. make his] maken H. 3467. perseueraunce] aqueyntaunce B, R, J.  
3468. 2nd on] off R, *om.* J. 3472. ther] *om.* R.  
3476. 2nd on] *om.* J, P. 3490. &] & of B.

Wisly weieth this chapitle in balaunce,  
Off Lisymachus and queen Arsynoe.

3492

¶ **Explicit.**

[How Ceramius of Macedony kyng that moordred  
his cosyns was slayn in bataile bi them [of  
Fraunce.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HE noble poete Iohn Bochas, in his book  
Procedyng foorth, compleyneth of pite,  
With quaky[n]g hand whan he his penne took  
And gan to write the woful destyne,  
As ye han herd, of queen Arsynoe,  
And how Ceramius, the stori maketh mynde,  
Was to hir fals, traitour & vnkynde.

As Iohn  
Bochas  
proceeded forth  
in his book,  
his hand  
trembled  
when he  
wrote the sad  
story of Queen  
Arsinoe.

3496

Of whos tresoun is maad a gret processe,  
And how he aftir was slayn in bataille,  
Punshed bi vengauce for his gret falsnesse,  
Lik as his stori maketh rehersaille.  
Which to remembre I cast me nat to faille,  
Folwyng myn auctour & proceede in writyng,  
How Ceramyus was slayn whan he was kyng.

3500 Ceraunus was  
afterwards  
slain in battle

3504

For whil that he bi his fals werkyng,  
In Macedoyne hadde gouernaile,  
Thre hundred thousand acountid be reknyng\*  
Wente out of Fraunce to conquere in Itaille;  
The hoost, departed in many strong bataille,  
Gat bi conquest thoruh ther hih renoun  
Ful many prouynce & many regioun.

3508 by the Gauls,  
after they had  
conquered  
Italy

3512

And as thei rood thoruh many gret contre, —  
This people of Gaule in steel armyd cleen,\* —  
Thei foundid castellis & many strong cite:  
Toward Rome thei bilt Milan & Sene,  
Vpon T[h]alpies ther armour shon ful sheene;  
And sum of them up to Rome wente  
Be verray force, and the cite brente.

3516 and built  
Milan and  
Sienna.  
Their armour  
gleamed on  
the Alps; and  
some of them  
burnt Rome,  
and others  
went up the  
Ægean Sea to  
Pavonia.

3520

3509. reknyng] writyng B, R, J, P.  
3510. in] om. R. 3514. contrees H.  
3515. cleen] briht B, sheene R, J.  
3516. Citees H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 102 recto.

- Summe partid up to the Grekissh Se,  
 Hadde a custum to chese ther duellyng place  
 Bi augurie, as briddes dede flee;  
 Folwyng ther fliht[e], thei gan aftir trace, 3524  
 Holdyng ther way, *witbynne* a litil space,  
 With myhti hand, the book doth specefie,  
 Thei cam tacontre callid Pauonye.
- They were a people of great courage, and, following Hercules' example, This folk of Gaule, which is callid France, 3528  
 To conquere londis put hemsilff in pres,  
 As most notable people of puissaunce,  
 Folwyng thexample of ther knihtli ences  
 In ther ridyng, of worthi Hercules, 3532  
 Which was worsheped in actis marcial  
 Lik as a god, and callid immortal.
- they conquered many countries. When they came to Macedonia, Thoruh grace of Fortune in ther cheualries  
 Conquered contres, alway foorth ridyng, 3536  
 Themsilff departyng in dyuers cumpanyes, —  
 Who them withstood thei consumed be brennyng.  
 Cam to Macedoyne wher Cerawm was kyng;  
 Of presumpcioun weenyng it sholde auaille, 3540  
 Out of ordynaunce he mette hem in bataile.
- Ceraunus fought them in his pride, although they offered to treat with him for peace. This Ceramius of outrage & of pride  
 Dempte hym able to meete *witb* hem of France;  
 But for he was thoruh moordre an homycide, 3544  
 He lacked grace & poweer in substance.  
 Yit thei off Gaule, bi prudent gouernaunce,  
 Offred onto hym, thouh he was rek[e]lles,  
 With Macedonoys for to trete of pes. 3548
- Defeated for his presumption, his head was cut off and set on a stake. But of\* presumpcioun & malencolie [p. 251]  
 Ageyn his enmyes he the feeld hath take,  
 And disconfited anon was his partie:  
 His men gan flee, & ha[ue] ther lord forsake; 3552  
 His hed smet off and set upon a stake.  
 But al his myscheeff was to lite in deede  
 To recompense his fraude & his falsheede.
- But there is no punishment adequate for murder. Ther is no peyne ageyn so gret offense 3556  
 Mai be deuised in no book that men reede,  
 Equialent moordre to recompence,

3521. to] thoruh H, R 3, thugh H 5.

3523, 24 are transposed in B; correction indicated by scribe.

3534. Immortal H. 3538. thei] the R — be] *witb* H, H 5.

3539. Ceraunus P. 3544. an] &amp; R.

3549. of] for B, J, R. 3558. Equyualence R.



Duli to punshe so outraious a deede,  
Of hym that made yonge childre bleede, 3560  
As dede Ceraum, which of fals couetise  
His cosyng slouh, as ye han herd deuse.

To thynke on moordre, it is to foul a thyng,  
To God and man hatful & terrible: 3564  
The infernal fraude, the deuellissh *compassyng*  
To ech creature of nature is odible,  
Which to redresse is an impossible.  
O cursid Ceram, I leue thi stori heere, 3568  
Thi name no more shal blotte my papeere!

It is too  
foul a thing,  
hateful and  
terrible to God  
and man.  
Cursed  
Ceraunus,  
your name shall  
no longer blot  
my paper!

[How the prynce Belgius was disconfited and  
brouht vnto nought.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR this tiraunt, as ye ha[ue] herd be cas,  
Slayn in bataile, this traitour odious,  
Anon in ordre cam to Iohn Bochas 3572  
A myhti prince callid Belgius,  
Dedli pale, with face furious,  
Which compleynynd, among this woful pres,  
His disconfiture doon be duk\* Sostenes. 3576

After  
Ceraunus, a  
prince called  
Belgius  
appeared,  
complaining  
with a furious  
and distorted  
face his  
disconfiture  
by Duke  
Sosthenes.

This sodeyn myscheef greued his herte sore;  
For al the folk that wer in his bataille  
Wer put to fliht[e]. Bochas writ no more  
Of his kniethod nor of his apparaille, 3580  
Sauf onli this; he maketh rehersaille,  
Of the Frensshe host, he tellith in certeyn,  
How he was chose for a cheeff capteyn,

His sudden  
misfortune  
grieved him  
sorely. Bochas  
says no more  
about him  
than that  
he was chosen  
a chief captain  
of the French  
army; nor do  
I find any other  
notice of  
Sosthenes,  
save that he  
was conquered  
by Brennus.

And how he cam into the riche lond 3584  
Of Macedoyne with his peepel of Fraunce,  
Til Sostenes the duk, with myhti hond,  
Discounfited hym, brouht hym to myschaunce.  
Of whom I fynde non other remembraunce, 3588  
Saue whan he wende ta be\* most glorious,  
He was outraid bi force of Brennyus.

3562. han] om. R. 3567. Impossible R.

3576. duk] queen B, R — Sosthenes P.

3585. his] this H, R 3.

3589. ta be] taue be B, R 3, H 5, tauethe R, to haue ben P, tau  
ben J.

3590. Brennus P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 102 verso.

[How Duk Brennyus delityng to robbe & spoile ended.]<sup>1</sup>

Brennus, king of Sens, was a conqueror who spared neither peoples nor gods, robbing all.

**T**HIS Brennyus, ful knihtli in werkyng,  
Which bi conquest gat many gret cite, 3592  
And, as I reede, of Sens he was kyng,  
Dispoilled regiouns & many gret contre,  
Robbed peeples of hih & low degre,  
Spared no goddis, but be violence 3596  
Took ther tresours; dede hem no reuerence.

The Greeks used to go to the temple of Apollo at Delphi to consult the oracle,

Ther was a temple gret and merueilous  
Bilt on a roche and on an hill off ston,  
Sacred Tappollo callid Delphicus, — 3600  
In al Grece so gret a god was non.  
And ofte sithe the people wolde gon  
Vp to a theatre which that stood withoute,  
To haue ansuere of that thei stood in doute. 3604

where they had answer given them by a spirit of false deception.

Ther trust, ther hope was to that god applied,  
Hauyng to hym synguler affecciou, —  
As thouh he myhte haue holpe & magnefied  
And doon to hem gret consolacioun; 3608  
For bi a sperit of fals decepcioun  
He gaff ansuere of sondri questiouns  
To folk that cam fro dyuers regiouns.

Brennus had no desire to worship the gods of Greece; he only wanted to rob them of their treasures.

Kyng Brennyus hadde no fantasie, 3612  
In ther templis aftir ther paynym guise  
Nouthur to worshepe nor to magnefie  
Ther Grekish goddis, to doon hem sacrefise;  
For in his herte he gan hem to despise, 3616  
Cauhte a ioie with al his fals robbours  
Them to despoile & robbe of ther tresours.

He promised to share the pillage with his men

Behihte his men, & seid in pley, n langage,  
That his desir and his entencioun 3620  
Was to be boti with them of such pillage  
As goddis hadde in ther pocessioun,  
And parte with hem for synguler guerdoun

3592. cite] cure R.

3593. Sens] Dens R, dens J — of Sens] since P — was] was made H, P.

3594, 95 are transposed in H. 3595. peeples J, people P.

3596. be] om. R

3618. ther] the R.

3621. boti] bootyng R 3, botyng H 5, boting P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 102 verso.

- For ther labour & ther gret trauailles 3624  
That thei had hadde with hym in his batailles.
- He gaff his people a maner hardynesse, and taught his  
Made hem truste in gret multitude, people to trust  
Hauyng despiht of thynnocent symplesse 3628 in numbers, and  
Of his enmyes, because thei wer but rude. despised the  
I meene tho folk, shortli to conclude, Delphian  
Which hadde in keepyng the ieweles precious priests because  
Of gret Appollo callid Delphicus. they were rude  
and simple. 3632
- The people also which was with Brennyus [p. 252] Brennus'  
Hadde al the day dronke myhti wynes — soldiers  
To fille ther paunchis thei wer so desirous, — were drunk,  
That thei forgat ther marcial doctrynes. and feeble to  
3636 climb the hill  
Tascende the mounteyn feeble wer ther chynes, and assault the  
Ther hedis toltir & ther brayn gan faille, temple;  
The temple aloffte to spoille it or tassaille.
- In ther ascendyng be weies that thei ches, 3640 and the priests,  
Vpon the roche thei wer bete down; clad in  
Preestis of the temple put hemsilff in pres — chasubles,  
Oon bar a standard, a-nother a gret penoun — fought them  
Clad in chesiples for hih deuocioun, bravely  
3644
- And with ther other vnkouth apparailles,  
Bothe on the roche & lowe in ther batailles.
- The people of Brennyus\* was incomparable, in spite of their  
Spradde al the feeldis, the stori berth witsnesse; 3648 great numbers;
- But it is said of old & is no fable,  
That no diffence is [in] dronk[e]nesse.  
And wisdam failleth wher is gret excesse;  
And in a feeld[e], pleynli to conclude, 3652  
Victori alway stant nat in multitude.
- For thei wer set, Bochas doth deuse, for they were  
Nat to kniethod but to fals outrage, set not on  
To spoile and robbe be gredi couetise, knightly deeds  
3656 but on robbery.
- And stuffe ther someres with outraious pillage;  
Furious rauyne hath brouht hem in a rage, —  
And farweel kniethod & marcial noblesse  
Wher couetise is ladi & maistresse! 3660
3637. wer] was H.  
3638. toltir J, R, tolyr H 5, toltir (*the r misformed*) H — brayns  
H, braynes R 3 — ganto R.  
3643. another] ano H. 3647. Brennyus B.  
3651. wher] ther H. 3652. feeld] freende R.  
3657. someres] om. R.

Besides  
Brennus the  
Gauls had  
two other  
leaders, Dukes  
Euridanus and  
Thessalonus.

Too myhti dukis wer with Brennyus,  
Which that wer[en] cheeff of his counsail.  
Manus\* the ton, the tothir Thesalorus,  
Which, as thei thouhte to ther gret auail, 3664  
Began a purpos, and it was disauail,  
To robbe the temple, the contre & ech touz,  
Which turnid aftir to ther confusioun.

Avarice  
strangles  
the prowess of  
many a worthy  
knight and  
turns nobility  
of heart into  
cowardice.

Thus auarice with stomak vnstaunchable 3668  
Hath stranglid the prowesse\* of many worthi kniht;  
And couetise, hir sustir vntretable,  
Hath of hih noblesse ful ofte queynt the liht.  
Wher Tantalus regneth, a leoun hath no myht: 3672  
This to meene, hunger & couetise  
Turnep al noblesse into cowardise.

For bi the counsail of these dukes tweyne,  
Brennyus sette al his oppynyoun; 3676  
To spoille & robbe dede his besi peyne,  
To pile the cites of al that regeoun.  
But in this while, as maad is menciouñ,  
Mid ther batailles, Bochas doth me lere, 3680  
The god Appollo & Pallas dede appeere.

In the midst  
of the fight  
Apollo appeared,  
young and  
lusty, armed  
all in gold, and  
Diana, with  
her keen  
arrows, and  
Minerva in a  
glittering  
habergeon.

Appollo first shewed his presence,  
Fressh, yong and lusti as any sonne sheene,  
Armed al in gold, and with gret violence 3684  
Entred the feeld[e], as it was weel seene.  
And Diana kam with hir arwes keene,  
And Mynerua in a briht haberioun,  
Which in ther komyng made a terrible souñ. 3688

The noise of  
their bright  
armour terrified  
the Gauls, and  
there was a  
hideous earth-  
quake and hail  
storm.

The noise was herd[e] of ther briht armure,  
Which made ther ennyes for feer almost to raue,  
That thei myht afforn hem nat endure,  
Fledde the feeld for dreed, themsilf to saue. 3692  
And ther was herd an hidous erthe-quake;  
And fro heuene in this mortal bataille,  
Of cold constreynyng gret stonyng gan douñ haille.

Brennus,  
mortally  
wounded, drove  
a dagger into  
his heart,

Ther aduersaries bete douñ & gaudid, 3696  
And afforn hem durste nat abide.  
And Brennyus so mortalli was woundid,

3663. Manus] eManus B, Emanvs R, Euridanus P — Thessa-  
lonus P.

3669. prowesse] poweer B, R. 3673. &] of H.

3688. Which] The which R.

3694. from H. 3695. douñ] to H.

Bothe brest & hed, & hurt thoruh outh side, —  
 Loo, heer the eende of couetise & pride: 3700  
 For Brennyus for constreynt of his smerte  
 Rooff with a dagger hymseluen to the herte.

This was his eende, vengable & merueilous; and both his  
 And his dukis slay[e]n bothe tweyne, 3704 slain. The  
 Callid Emanus & Thesalorus, gods of the  
 The Grekissh goddis gan at hym so disdeyne. Greeks would  
 Of sacrilege seeth heer the greuous peyne: allow no  
 For who to goddis list do non obseruauance, 3708 sacrilege.  
 Shal vnwarli be punished with vengauance.

It is nat holsum with goddis [for] to pleie, It is not  
 Nor ther puissauance presumptuousli tattame; wise to trifle  
 For wher-as thei be vengauance list werreie, 3712 with the gods.  
 Who list assay shal fynde it no game.  
 For his presumpcioun Brennyus fond the same;  
 For Appollo, Diane and Mynerue  
 For his outrage vnwarli made hym sterue. 3716

### Lenvoye.

**T**HIS tragedie declareth, who list heere, [p. 253] This tragedie  
 Of duk Brennyus many gret bataile, tells of battles  
 His extort conquest, & hooli the maneere fought by  
 How [he] bi force rood thoruh al Itaille. Brennus, and  
 Afftir how he the Romeyns dede assaille; 3720 how he fell  
 His fall in Grece bi vengable violence, in Greece  
 For he to goddis list do no reuerence. because he  
 had no respect  
 for the gods.

Took al the tresours & ieweles most enteere 3724 He robbed  
 Out of ther templis, & richest apparaille, the temples of  
 Gold and perle, & al that stuff ifeere, and all men;  
 To his ences which that myhte auaille.  
 The riche he robbed, oppressid the poraille, 3728  
 Of verrai pompe & froward insolence,  
 And list to goddis do no reuerence.

This myhti tiraunt most surquedous of cheere, and no measure  
 With couetise brent in his entraille, 3732 could restrain  
 Whos gredi fret ther myht no mesure steere, his greed, until  
 Til that Fortune at myscheeff dede hym faille; Fortune threw  
 He lakked myht hir variaunt wheel to naille. him from her  
 wheel.

3703. his] the R.

3705. Emanvs H, Euridanus P — Thesaleus H, Thessalonus P.

3710. for] om. R, J, P. 3720. he] om. J.

- Ageyns whos fall ther was no resistance, 3736  
 For he [to] goddis list do no reuerence.
- Noble Princes, conceyueth & dooth lere  
 The fall of Brennyus for mysgouernaille,  
 And prudentli peisyng this mateere, 3740  
 Vertu is strenger than outhur plate or maille.  
 Afforn considred what Salamon\* doth counsaile,  
 Chief preseruatiiff of your magnificence,  
 Is first to God to do due reuerence. 3744
- [How Pirrus kyng of pirothe listnat lyue in pees but  
 of pride and presumpcioun in werre, cam to  
 myschaunce.]<sup>1</sup>
- Next appeared  
 young  
 Pyrrhus, son  
 of Eacides, born  
 to reign in  
 Epirus.  
**I**N Bochas book next folwyng on þe ryng  
 Cam yong[e] Pirrus, sone of Eacides,  
 Born be discent to regnen & be kyng  
 And tenherite the lond of Pirothes. 3748  
 Yit in his youthe & in his tendre ences,  
 The froward people duellyng in that place,  
 Withoute his gilt, gan his deth purchase.
- To preserve  
 him from his  
 hostile subjects  
 he was sent  
 to Glaucus,  
 king of Illyria,  
 whose wife was  
 Berenice,  
 But to preserue hym, as maad is mencionn, 3752  
 He was commyttid & taken in keepyng  
 Certeyn yeeris for his sauacioun  
 To oon Glaucus of Illirie kyng,  
 Whos wiff was cosyn, be record of writyng, 3756  
 To the seid[e] famous Eacides,  
 And she in stori callid Beronices.
- born of his own  
 line.  
 He nih of blood[e] to this noble queen,  
 Bothe tweyne born of o lynage, 3760  
 Wonder gracious to alle that dede hym seen  
 And weel faouored of fetures & visage.  
 And in the while of his tendre age,  
 Oon Cassander, off Macedoyne kyng, 3764  
 Compassid his deth bi sotil fals werkyng.
- Yet while he  
 was still young,  
 Cassander  
 plotted his  
 death and  
 sent for him,  
 threatening  
 Glaucus that  
 unless Pyrrhus  
 came he would  
 begin a mortal  
 war.  
 And his purpos for to brynge aboute,  
 He sente for hym bi fals collusioun,  
 Puttyng Glauchus pleynli out of doute, 3768  
 But yiff he cam lich his entencioun,  
 He wolde werke to his destruccioun,  
 Gadre peepel bothe nih & ferre  
 And on Glauchus gynne a mortal werre. 3772

3737. to] om. R. 3742. Salamon] Brennyus B, J, R.  
 3757. the is repeated in H. 3766. his] this H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 103 verso.

But king Glaucus took therof\* non heede,  
 Hauyng to Pirrus so gret affecciuon:  
 Of hym reseuyed verraili in deede  
 To been his sone bi adopcion,  
 Purposyng of hool entencioun  
 To make Pirrus, pleyntli yiff he may,  
 To been his hair & regne aftir his day.

3776 But Glaucus paid no attention to him, and purposed to make Pyrrhus his heir;

Pirrus alway up growyng bi encres,  
 Ful amyable bothe of cheer & face;  
 And in this while the peple of Pirothes,  
 Knowyng that he stood in Glaucus grace,  
 Chaunged ther hertis, cast hem in short space  
 For to restore, alle of o corage,  
 The said[e] Pirrus to his heritage.

3780 and when the people of Epirus heard that he stood in Glaucus' favour, they restored him to his heritage  
 3784

Thus bi assent he was crowned kyng,  
 Yong, fressh & lusti, & semli therwithal,  
 Wonder weel thewed in his upgrowyng,  
 Lik his lynage of corage wex roiall.  
 The which was cause in especial,  
 He was beloued of freendis al aboute,  
 And of his enmyes gretli had in doute.

3788 and crowned him king.

The name of hym gan to sprede ferre  
 Thoruh al Grece aboute in ech contre.  
 The lond of Tarente gan in [t]his tyme a werre  
 Ageyn[es] the Romeyns, as ye may see,  
 Requeryng Pirrus that he wolde bee  
 Fauourable & helpyng of entente  
 To the parti of them of Tharente.

3796 He was beloved of his friends and feared by his enemies; his name spread far and wide, and the Tarentines asked him to help them against Rome.  
 3800

To ther request he gan condescende,  
 And of purpos cast hym nat to faile,  
 Yif that Fortune wolde hym grace sende,  
 With myhti hand & marcial apparaile  
 For to be lord & conquere al Itaille,  
 As dide his vncler whilom, dout[e]les,  
 Callid Alisaundre kyng of Epirothes.

[p. 254] This he did, and aspired to the conquest of all Italy.  
 3804

3773. therof] heerof B, R, J, H 5.  
 3784. Chaunged] changyng H, R 3, H 5.  
 3792. al] om. R.  
 3795. ech] his R.  
 3796. this] his J, H 5, P — a] om. R, J, P.  
 3800. the] be H — 1st of] with H.

First he had  
a battle with  
a Roman consul  
at Heraclea,

First he began his conquest in Itaille 3808

Toward Heraclie, a myhti gret cite,  
Wher with Brennyus he hadde a gret bataille,  
Consul of Rome & lord of that contre.

And to thencre of his felicite, 3812

As [it] is remembred in historie,  
Vpon Romeyns he gat that victorie.

and won by  
means of his  
elephants with  
castles on their  
backs.

The olifauntis with castelis on ther bak  
Caused Pirrus, the yonge manli knyht, 3816

With his wisdam, in which ther was no lak,  
To putte his enmyes that day to the fliht.

And in this while it happed fourth riht,  
The Secilians, Bochas berth record, 3820

Among hemsilff[e] wer at gret discord.

At that time  
the Sicilians  
were at discord  
among them-  
selves and  
asked Pyrrhus  
to be their  
king.

Ther was atween hem gret dyuisioun,

Ech to other contrarie in werkyng;

But to reforme ther fals discencioun, 3824

Thei preied Pirrus to come & be ther kyng.

To whos request he fulli assentyng,

Bi them maad strong, list nat to differre,

Ageyn the Romeyns to begynne a werre. 3828

He assented,  
and,  
strengthened by  
them, attacked  
the Romans at  
Naples, where  
he was defeated  
and ran away.

Beside a castell callid Esculus,

Withynne Poile, his baneres he gan splaie.

The same day, nat happi nor vrous, 3832

Contrarious Fortune his power gan affraie,

Wounded to the deth gan gretli hym dismaye,\*

Be which occasioun this Pirrus anon riht

Leep on his courseer & took hym to the fliht.

He made his  
son Helenus  
king of Sicily

A sone he hadde callid Helenus, 3836

Born of the douhtir of kyng Agothodes,

Whom he ordeyned, myn auctour tellith thus,

For to be crowned, to his gret encre,

On Sicilians to regne ther in pes, 3840

Weenyng therbi taue had auantage.

And in this while cam to hym a message

3808. gan R.

3809. Heraclie] om. H.

3810. Brennyus] Leuinus P — gret] strong H.

3813. it] om. R, J, H, P. 3815. bak] bakkis H.

3818. to the] vn to H. 3820. berth] bers H.

3827. strong] om. R.

3829. Asculus P. 3833. dismaye] disamaie B.

3837. Agathocles P. 3840. ther to regne H, R 3.



- Out of Tharente, which stood in auenture  
 For his absence out of that regeoun, —  
 Yif he nat cam, thei myhte nat endure  
 Ageyn the poweer of them of Rome toun,  
 Which of assent\* wer descendid doun  
 Ageyn[e]s hem, thei stondyng in dispa[i]re,  
 Sauff in abidyng upon his repair.
- Pirrus this while stood in ful hard[e] poynt,  
 Wex abasshed & dul in his corage,  
 Atwix[e] too hangyng in disioynt:  
 Werreied of Romeyns, hatid in Cartage;  
 Hadde a bataille to his fynal damage  
 Withynne a feeld callid Arusius,  
 Ther put to fliht bi oon Fabricius.
- Destitut bi fortune & appeired,  
 Void of socour, bareyn of richesse,  
 Lik a man of hope disespeired,  
 Toward Epire in haste he gan hym dresse,  
 Wher he was first, his stori doth expresse,  
 As ye han herd rehersed be wrytyng,  
 Bi successioun whilom lord & kyng.
- But whan he cam to Epire his cite,  
 He gan of newe ageyn Antigonus,  
 Kyng of Macedoyne, a ful strong contre,  
 Hym to werreie he was so desirous.  
 And bi conquest, the stori tellith thus,  
 Withynne a while, ther was no gret lettyng,  
 Bi helpe of Fortune he was crownid kyng.
- Nat seuene monethes regnyng in quiete,  
 Bi Lysymachus, maugre al his myht,  
 He was put doun & remeued from his sæte.  
 Yit of presumpcioun, thouth ther was no riht,  
 He took on hym to gynne a newe fiht  
 Geyn Lacedemoyns, & felli them werreie,  
 Onli because thei wolde hym nat obeie.
- Whos presumpcioun whan that thei beheeld,  
 Bothe of prudence & of policie  
 Women wer armed to make a large feeld,  
 With multitude toppressen his partie,

3844 and went to Tarentum, where the people were hard pressed by the Romans.

3848

3852 Harassed by the Romans and hated in Carthage, he was again defeated,

3856

and, returning to Epirus in evil plight,

3860

3864 nevertheless began a successful war against Antigonus of Macedon and was crowned king in his stead.

3868

3872 Seven months later he was dethroned by Lysimachus and presumptuously attacked the Spartans.

3876

3880 Even the women took the field against him, and his son was slain.

3846. the] ther R. 3847. assent] ascent B.  
 3851. abaisht R. 3855. Arusius] Tarentinus P.  
 3859. despeired R, J, disepeirid H.

For comoun proffit put hem in iupartie;  
 And fynalli such was ther ordenaunce,  
 That seid[e] Pirrus was brouht to myschaunce. 3884

Afterwards  
 he fought  
 the Argives and  
 was killed by  
 a stone as he  
 came to the  
 city wall.

His sone ther slayn, callid Tholome, [p. 255]  
 And many other loste ther her lyues;  
 Yit for al that, of pride and cruelte,  
 He gan a werre ageyn[e]s the Argyues. 3888

And at the eende of al his mortal striues,  
 For conclusioun, this was his laste fall,  
 Slayn with a ston as he cam to ther wall.

His head was  
 cut off and  
 sent to Antig-  
 onus.

His hed smet off in the same place, 3892  
 And therof made an oblacioun

To Antigonus for a gret solace.  
 Thus list Fortune quite his presumpcioun,  
 Afttir his werris with many regioun. 3896  
 Loo, heer the eende of folkis rek[e]les  
 That folwed werre & list nat lyue in pes!

[How the tiraunt Aristotyn/ bi trecherous werkyng  
 sette a-side the right lyne/ was crowned kyng  
 of Epirothes & afttir slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

Aristotimus, a  
 tyrant, set  
 aside the two  
 heirs to the  
 throne of  
 Epirus,

**F**ORTH procedyng, folwyng Iohn Bochas  
 I will reherse in ful pleyn langage 3900  
 How Aristotyn, a tiraunt, this the cas,  
 Caste & compassed bi ful gret outrage,  
 Hauyng no title of riht nor heritage,  
 Of Epirothes bi trecherous werkyng 3904  
 Voidyng the lyne, ther to be crowned kyng.

Pyrrhus and  
 Ptolemy, and  
 became king  
 himself.

Lyuyng too childre, the stori tellith thus,  
 Born bi discent to regne in that cite,  
 Theldest of them callid was Pirrus 3908  
 And the second named Tholome;  
 And bothe tweyne bi the cruelte  
 Of Aristotyn wer falsli set aside,  
 He maad[e] kyng, this tiraunt, thoruh his pride. 3912

Like a tyrant  
 he slew and  
 exiled all the  
 notables

And whil that he thus gan occupie,  
 Lik a tiraunt cruel & vengable,  
 Of fals[e] rancour and malencolie

3885. R omits to line 484 of Book V. 3886. loste] left H.

3896. many a H.

3901. Aristotimus P. 3910. the] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 104 recto.

- Slouh al the citeseyns that wer most notable, 3916  
 And exilid, this stori is no fable,  
 Onli of malis withynne his herte cloos,  
 Al that wer contrary vnto his purpos.
- Vnto the women bi fraudulent sentence 3920  
 He made ordeyne, aftir that anon,  
 Of feyned pite gaff to them licence  
 To ther freendis freeli for to gon  
 With ther richessis; but thei wer euerichon 3924  
 Bi his biddyng & bi his tresoun  
 Take bi the weie & fetrid in prisoun, —
- Or thei wer war was set on them arest.  
 And aftir that, of vengable cruelte 3928  
 The[r] childre slay[e]n, sovkyng at ther brest,  
 Maidnes oppressid of ther virgynyte.  
 But in this while, at Epire\* the cite  
 Ther was a kniht passyng of gret age, 3932  
 Which caste of purpos tauenge [t]his outrage.
- This same kniht, myn auctour tellith thus,  
 In the stori pleyntli as I reede,  
 Was in Greek tunge callid Bellanicus, 3936  
 Riht wis & manli bothe in werk & deede.  
 And thynges tweyne put hym out of dreede  
 Texecute his purpos in certeyn,  
 Maugre alle tho that wolde been hym ageyn. 3940
- For comoun proffit he drad nat to\* be ded;  
 A cause was this: for he was falle in age;  
 And a-nother, that put hym out of dreed,  
 For he no childre hadde of his lynage. 3944  
 His quarell rihtfull gaf hym auountage,  
 And heerupon gadred hym of newe  
 Such as he knew that manli wer & trewe.
- This purpos holde with circumspect auis,  
 And theron maad ful prudent ordenaunce, 3948  
 This Bellanicus, old, hardi & riht wis,  
 Afforn provided bi knihtli purueiaunce,  
 The said[e] tiraunt brouht onto myschaunce 3952  
 Bi help of them that wer to hym assentid,  
 Vnwarli slayn, whos deth was nat repentid.

3916. most] full H. 3925. 2nd bi] om. H.  
 3929. children H. 3931. at] in H, R 3, H 5, P — Epire] Cipe B.  
 3934. This] The H. 3936. Helematus P.  
 3941. to] for to B.

[How quene Arcynoe for the auoutrie don with  
Demetrius husbond of hir douhtir Beronices/  
ended in sorow.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas next  
turned his pen  
to the peruerse  
licentiousness  
of Arsinoe, who  
was very  
beautiful.

**A**FFTIR this stori Bochas gan applie  
To turne his penne, lik as ye shal heere, 3956  
To write & tell the froward lecherie  
Of Arsynoe, plesaunt of look & cheere,  
Which of hir port & eek of hir maneere  
Was in hir daies, lik as it is founde, 3960  
For crafft & beute callid Venus the secounde.

She was the  
wife of Magas,  
king of Cyrene,  
and they had  
a daughter  
Berenice, who  
was by her  
father's bidding  
to marry the  
son of Ptolemy;

For hir fairnesse youen in mariage  
To noble Agas of Cirenes kyng,  
And atween hem, whil thei wer yong of age, 3964  
Thei hadde a douhtir, bi record of writyng,  
Callid Beronices; the kyng at his eendyng  
In his testament bad she sholde be  
Weddid to the sone of kyng Tholome. 3968

And this was doon of entencioun  
To cese the werris, that hadde endured longe  
Atween Egipt, as maad is mencion,  
And the Cirenes, bothe rewmys stronge: 3972  
Bi this mariage that he myhte vndirfonge  
In his deyng to sette a fynal pes  
Tween these too rewmys for ther bothe encres.

but after Magas'  
death, Arsinoe  
married Berenice

After whos deth[e], thus the mateer stood: 3976  
Queen Arsynoe, most subtil in werkyng,  
Ageyn this mateer so cruel was & wood,  
Maried hir douhtir, withoute mor lettyng,  
Callid Beronices, ageyn[e]s the biddyng 3980  
Of hir fadir, that callid was Agas,  
As heer-toform rehersid is the caas.

to Demetrius,  
brother of  
Antigonus, king  
of Macedon.

She maried hire to oon Demetrivs  
That brother was, bi Bochas rehersyng, 3984  
Onto the myhti grete Antigonvs,  
Beyng in Grece of Macedoyne kyng.  
But infortunat was afftir hir weddyng,  
As in this stori suyng ye shal see, 3988  
Bi the fals werkynge of queen Arsynoe.

3977. most subtil in werkyng] made sotile werkyng H.

3984. bi] om. H. 3987. was afftir hir] he was afftir this H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 104 verso.

- And to conclude shortli this mateere,  
 Whan this queen, this double Arsynoe,  
 Sauh of Demetrius the visage & the cheere,  
 3992 His look, his colour, his langage & beute,  
 His manli port & his liberalite,  
 She was enamoured, of flessfli fals plesaunce,  
 Lik hir desir taue his aqueyntaunce. 3996
- Of hir nature she was most lecherous;  
 And of hir froward inclynacioun  
 She brouhte aboute that Demetrius  
 Assentid was bi hir suggestioun 4000  
 For tacomplisshe, lik hir oppynyoun,  
 Al hir desirs of flessfli appetit:  
 Thus of accord thei folwed ther delit.
- Lefft his wiff callid Beronices,  
 4004 The queenys douhtir, & ageyn al riht  
 In a place secre, out of pres,  
 Thei lay togidre almost euery nyht,  
 Takyng non heed of God nor of no wiht, 4008  
 Til of fortune the cas is so befall,  
 That he was hatid. of his knihtis all,
- Despiht thei hadde of Arsynoe,  
 The deede horrible whan thei dide espie. 4012  
 His wiff Beronices eek whan she dede see  
 Hooli the maner of ther ribaudie,  
 In herte she kauhte a gret malencolie,  
 Ordeyned knihtis in steel armid briht 4016  
 In ther auoutry to take\* hem on a niht.
- Liggyng a-bedde, slepte & took no keepe  
 Afftir fals lustis which thei hadden vsid,  
 Thei fill upon hem euene whil\* thei sleepe. 4020  
 The deede open myht nat been excusid,  
 To al the world[e] thus thei wern accusid.  
 With suerdis drawe the knihtis thilke niht  
 To slen hem bothe wer purposed anon riht. 4024
- Out on Beronices! crieth Iohn Bochas,  
 Because she bad spare Arsynoe,  
 Ground, roote & gynnyng of this horrible caas,  
 Seide hir merci was verray cruelte, — 4028

When Arsinoe saw Demetrius, who was very handsome, she fell in love with him

and so managed that she became his mistress.

He forsook Berenice and was hated by his knights for his behaviour.

In her wrath, Berenice ordered armed men to take Arsinoe and Demetrius in their adultery.

Falling upon them in their sleep with drawn swords, they were about to put them both to death;

but Berenice bade them spare Arsinoe's life, which Bochas says was a very foolish thing to do,

3993. &] his H, R 3, H 5. 4009. is] om. H.

4017. take] taken B.

4020. whil] whan B, J, R 3, when P.

- To saue suchon it was a fals pite,  
As seith myn auctour, a thyng contrarious,  
Hir to preserue & slen Demetrius!
- for she was  
the cause of all  
the trouble. O Beronices, smal is thi discrecioun, 4032  
To saue the queen that hath thi[s] tresoun founde.  
First to Demetrius she gaff occasioun,  
For which she sholde haue had the firste wounde  
Take for them bothe, and in cheynis bounde; 4036  
And aftir that, this fals Arsynoe  
Texauple of other sholde haue punished bee.
- Arsinoe shielded  
Demetrius with  
her naked body And whil thei wer[e]n thus taken in cloos,  
The said Arsynoe made no delay, 4040  
But from hir bed anon she up aroos,  
Withoute clothes, naked as she lay,  
Ran to ther suerdis in al ther gret affray,  
Wente atween hem, did hir besi peyne 4044  
To bere of strokis with hir armys tweyne.
- and begged the  
knights to spare  
him and kill  
her instead. To saue Demetrius, naked as she stood,  
Void of al dreed[e] dede hir besi cure,  
Hir white bodi al bespreynt with blood, 4048  
Gan to crien out on eueri creature,—  
“Alas,” quod she, “lat me allone endure  
Deth be my-silff! ye been to despitous,  
To save my lyff and slen Demetrius!” 4052
- But it was of  
no avail:  
both died. To the erthe anon she fill adoun, [p. 257]  
To stonde upriht she myht[e] nat susteene,  
Ded, pale & wan, with many pitous souz  
Deth of Demetrius gan wofulli bemeene, 4056  
Enbracyng hym with al his woundis greene,  
And in hir armys, al-be that he lay ded,  
She kissid his mouth, cold, blew & nothyng red.
- Berenice  
afterwards  
married  
Ptolemy. In sorwe & compleynt thus she made an eende. 4060  
I write no mor of this Arsynoe,  
But to Beronices ageyn I wil now weende;  
For Bochas seith, the stori ye may see,  
She aftir was weddid to Tholome,\* 4064  
Lik as it was hir fadris first entent,  
Whan he deied & made his testament. 4066

¶ *Finis libri quarti.*

4033. this] thi J, thy P. 4041. roos H.

4064. Tholome] worthi Tholome B, J, woorthy Ptholome P.

## BOOK V

### ¶ Incipit Liber Quintus.

[Here Bochas writeth ayenst hem þat delite in beute & semlynesse, calling to purpos how, A man, born in Tuscan which excellid in beute and fairenesse, and for his beute sholdenot\* geve othir occasioun to synne he disfigured his visage with many a grete wounde and spotte.]<sup>1</sup>

**H**EEER Iohn Bochas scorneth & hath disdeyn

Of thre maner folk he dide see  
Heer in þis world[e], which þat in certeyn  
Set al ther ioie and ther felicitye  
For texelle in fairnesse & beute,  
Natwithstandyng, as he\* weel telle can,  
It hath vndoon ful many worthi man.

Record he taketh of Demetrius,  
Which in his tyme was fairest in certeyn,  
Which caused hym to be contrarious  
To al vertu; his stori ye haue\* seyn.  
But of the folk Bochas hath most disdeyn,  
That besi been to conquare & recure  
Beute bi craft, which kometh nat of nature.

The thridde is he that gruchcheth ageyn Kynde  
For lak of stature or\* of semlynesse:  
And alle thes thre be ignoraunt & blynde,  
And ageyn resoun ther corages thei up dresse.  
Yit aboue beute vertu is maistresse;  
And litil worth is fairnesse in certeyn  
In a persone wher no vertu is seyn.

[p. 259] John Bochas here expresses his contempt for three sorts of people: those who set all their joy to excel in beauty and are contrary to virtue,

8 those who seek to obtain beauty by art which comes not from nature, and those who complain of their lack of stature or good looks.

16

20 Virtue is above beauty.

6. he] ye B, J. 7. many a H.

11. haue] han B.

13. to conquare] by conquest to H.

16. or] & B, J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 105 recto — sholdenot] sloddenot J.

- Bochas tells the story of a Tuscan called Spurnya, whose fairness brought women into dotage;
- Vnto purpos he tellith of a man  
That excelled al other in fairnesse,  
Callid Spurnya, & born was in Tuscan. 24  
And folkis hadde ioie and gret gladnesse  
To beholde hym for his semlynesse,  
Whos beute brouht[e] women in dotage,  
Whan thei caste ther look on his visage. 28
- Wyues, maydnes duellyng in that contre  
Presed faste on hym to beholde,  
Bi thoccasioun of his gret beute,  
Nat onli yonge, but summe that wer olde. 32  
With lous accesse now wer thei hoot, now colde:  
Thus was his beute to many creature  
Founde in effect a [ful] percilous lure.
- and as their husbands were jealous, he prudently resolved to avoid all evil occasion,
- Husbondis olde kauhte a fantasie 36  
And hadde in maner a suspecioniun,  
Stered bi the serpent of fals ielousie,  
Toward Spurnya, as maad is mencioun;  
But for tauoide al euel occasioun 40  
Of any people that such malis thouhte,  
Ye shal heere how wisli that he wrouhte.
- by defacing his countenance with so many cuts and gashes, that he lost all his attraction.
- To put a-wey fals delectacioun 44  
And alle occasiouns of Cupidis rage,  
He of prudence and discrecioun  
With many wounde diffaced his visage;  
For he dempte it was a gret damage,  
That bi thenchesoun of excellent beute 48  
Any creature hyndred sholde be.
- Wise philosophers and poets commended him greatly for this notable deed.
- Philisophres & poetis that wer wise  
Gaff vnto hym gret comendacioun,  
That he koude so notabli deuse, 52  
To fynde a weie withynne his resoun,  
To sette aside al occasioun  
Of such vnleefful fless[h]li fantasie,  
That myhte stere women to lecherie. 56
- He saw that all beauty fades like summer flowers
- He knew afforn & sauh bexperience,  
That al beute shal waste a-wey & fade  
Lik somer flours in ther most excellence,  
That growe on hillis & lowe down in the shade: 60  
The rose, the lilie, whan thei be most glade,

34. many a H. 35. ful] om. J. 44. alle] fals H.



Vpon ther stalkis — ther preef is alday seyn —  
Been beten doun with a stormy reyn.

And semblabli in eueri creature  
Of louh degre or of hih estat,  
Beute abit nat, nor lenger doth endure  
Than youthes sesoun; with age is ful chekmaat.  
Who thynketh heron, I holde hym fortunat,  
And can afforn[e] in his resoun caste,  
No worldli beute in erthe may alway laste.

64 and lasts no  
longer than  
youth. I hold all  
men fortunat  
who are aware  
of this.  
68

### ¶ *Lenvoye.*

**Y**E worldli folk that reio[is]she in beute,  
Seeth with the eien of your aduertence  
How with a smal sodeyn infirmyte,  
Whan deth & age list shewen ther presence,  
Disteyne al fresshnesse with vnwar violence,  
Ageyn whos myht ther is non other grace:  
Processe of yeeris al beute doth difface.

Ye worldly folk,  
who reioice in  
beauty,  
72 remember that  
its freshness is  
dimmed by age  
and death.

Thouh Demetrius was fair vpon to see,  
As ye han herd rehersid in sentence,  
Geyn lawe & riht he loued Arsynoe,  
Thoccaseioun founde bi hir fals insolence,  
Because resoun made no resistence,  
Nat aduerting how eueri hour & space  
Processe of yeeris al beute doth difface.

Although  
Demetrius  
was fair, he  
loved Arsinoe  
80 against law and  
right.

Ful horrible was ther iniquite,  
And tofor God hatful ther offence.  
For thoruh fals lust of sensualite,  
Lost was the bridil of inward prouidence.  
Sharp mortal suerd made the recompence,  
Drownid in teres, whan she dide hym embrace,  
With bloodi woundis disfigured al his face.

[p. 260] Their sin was  
horrible and  
hateful to God,  
and their  
recompence was  
88 death.

O noble Princis, lat this stori bee  
A cleer merour to your magnificence,  
Theryn considerid the fals fragilite  
Of worldli fairnesse, which is but apparence  
And transitorie, but so be that prudence  
Gouerne the passage vicious lust tenchace:  
Processe of yeeris al beute doth difface!

O noble  
92 Princes, remem-  
ber the fragility  
of worldly  
beauty, which  
is but appear-  
ance unless  
prudence banish  
96 all vicious  
desires.

75. vnwar] sodeyn H. 80. ageyn H.  
91. dishguryng H.

[How the too brethern, Seleuchus and Anthiochus  
eche desirous to excellen other fel at discord  
ended in mischeff.]<sup>1</sup>

No quarrel is  
worse than one  
between kindred,  
especially when  
they are persons  
of high estate.

**T**HER is no man þat can in stori reede  
Of mor myscheef nor of mor debat, 100  
Than of debat þat is atween kynreede,  
Tween blood & blood, geyn kynde infortunat;  
Namlī in personys which been of hih estat,  
As it fill onys, the stori berþ record, 104  
Atween to brethre that wer at discord.

Seleucus and  
Antiochus, two  
brothers, blinded  
by worldly  
covetousness,  
were bitter  
rivals.

The ton Seleuchus, Antiochus the tothir,  
As the stori heeraftir shal deuse:  
Ech desirous for texcellen othir 108  
In worldli worshep; & wonderli thei wer wise.  
And bothe blent bi worldli couetise  
For to clymben up to hih estat,  
Which caused hem to been at debat. 112

Both were  
mighty kings  
and both were  
destroyed  
by the war that  
arose between  
them.

Bothe mihti kyngis, Bochas makth mencioun,  
And of o wombe sothli thei wer born,  
Vndir a cursid fell constellacioun:  
Of froward seed may growe no good[e] corn. 116  
And thuruh couetise bothe thei wer lorn  
And destroied bi the mortal werre  
That was atween hem, in Asia nih & ferre.

It is grievous  
to read of their  
battles and  
broken promises.

It is to me verray contagious 120  
To reede the batailles & the discenciouns,  
The false promyses of Antiochus,  
With his\* deceitis & conspiraciouns.  
Brethre of berthe & off condiciouns, 124  
Contrarious weies euer thei dede weende,  
Froward ther gynnyng [&] froward was ther eende.

Their mother  
was Laodice;  
Seleucus was  
king in Asia,  
Antiochus in  
Syria. They  
lived among  
robbers and  
always fled  
when they  
fought.

Ther mooder was callid Laodices,  
And in Asia Seleuchus was regnyng, 128  
Euer at werre, koude nat lyue in pes;  
And in Surrie Antiochus was kyng.  
And among robbours thei made þer eendyng:  
Wher-euer thei fauht, outhr in wrong or riht, 132  
Thei neuer abod but took hem to the fliht.

102. geyn] ageyn H. 107. the] their H.

123. his] the B.

133. Never thei bood J, P — to the] vn to H — the] om. J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 105 verso.

- Thouh Seleuchus was at his gynnyng  
 Shynnyng in glorie & in hih prowesse,  
 And of Asie he was lord & kyng,  
 With gret diffame was dirked his noblesse,  
 Because that he of gret vnkyndenesse  
 Ful falsli slouh, withoute iugement,  
 His yonger brother, that was innocent. 136
- And bi the biddyng of Laodices,  
 Which was his mooder, of hatful cruelte  
 Falsli to moordre the queen Beronices,  
 Wiff to the kyng callid Tholome,  
 Regnyng in Egipt; but it stood that he,  
 For al his poweer, failed of his pray,  
 Because that she was war & fledde a-way. 140
- Yit aftirward, of old hate & envie,  
 This Seleuchus, bi ful fals tresoun,  
 Moordred Beronices bi conspiracie,  
 Hir sone also, as maad is mencionn.  
 The sclauendre aros thoruh many a regioun  
 And was reportid onto his diffame,  
 Wherthoruh he loste his worshep & his name. 148
- And on this moordre auengid for to bee,  
 For thorrrible gret abusioun,  
 The kyng of Egipt, the said[e] Tholome,  
 Gan make hym strong, & cam with peepel doun.  
 But for ther was so gret discencioun  
 Thoruh al his lond, the stori seith certeyn,  
 He was constreyned to retourne hom ageyn. 152
- Seleuchus thanne maad a strong arme,  
 Gadred shippis, stuffed hem with vitaille,  
 Toward Asie he taken hath the se,  
 But such tempest gan his peepel assaile,  
 That ther hertis and poweer gan to faile,  
 With thundryng, lihtnyng vengabli distreyned,  
 To take the lond of neede he was constreyned. 156
- The peepel of Asie seyng this myscheeff, [p. 261]  
 Hadde of Seleuchus gret compassioun;  
 And ther socour to setten at a preeff,  
 Thei hym resceuyed into that regeoun, 160
150. fals conspiracie H.  
 167. lihtnyng] levenyng — distreyned] disteynyd H.  
 169. The] This H.

Seleucus lost  
 his good name  
 by slaying an  
 innocent  
 136 younger  
 brother,

140 and he  
 would have  
 killed Queen  
 Berenice, wife  
 of Ptolemy,  
 if she had not  
 144 run away.

148 Yet he  
 succeeded in  
 slaying her  
 together with  
 her son  
 afterwards.

156 Ptolemy sought  
 revenge, but  
 could do  
 nothing be-  
 cause of the  
 dissensions in  
 his kingdom.

164 Seleucus then  
 collected an  
 army and ships  
 and set sail  
 for Asia, where  
 he was forced  
 to land by a  
 tempest. The  
 people treated  
 him kindly.

Thouh it [so] stood, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
That affor-tyme for his cruel deede  
Thei hadde his persone in ful gret hatreede.

He began a  
war against  
Ptolemy and  
was defeated.

And for he fond Fortune fauorable, 176

Nat considryng hir mutabilite,  
He cast of rancour for to be vengable,  
And gynne a werre ageyn[es] Tholome,  
His men outraied, he was maad to flee; 180

Knew no refuge nor socour of non othir,  
But for gret myscheeff sente to his brothir, —

Promising his  
brother to  
crown him king  
of Asia, he  
asked his aid,  
but in the  
meanwhile made  
a ten years'  
truce with  
Ptolemy;

I meene his brothir callid Antiochus,  
Behestyng hym for to crowne *hym kyng* 184

Of al Asie, his stori tellith thus,—  
Took treus this while, be sotil fals werkyng,  
With Tholome for ten yeer enduryng;  
And whan his brother cam with his poweer, 188  
Falsid his promys, double of herte & cheer.

and when his  
brother came  
to help him  
failed to keep  
his promise;  
so they  
fell out again  
and fought, and  
Seleucus fled,  
as was his wont.

Thus of newe thei fillen at debat;  
Euerich gan other myhtili werreie.  
Fals couetise tencrecen ther estat 192

Caused that nouthen list other to obeie.  
Mette in a feeld, ther is no mor to seie,  
Fauht hand of hand ther hostis bothe too;  
Seleuchus fledde, as he was wont to doo. 196

Thus a fals werre of hatreede fraternall  
Ageyn nature set hem at discord,  
Ech bisi was in especiall,  
As ther stori remembreth be record, 200

Neuer ther lyue to been of oon accord.  
But whan Seleuchus was thus put to fiht,  
The peep<sup>le</sup> off Surrie gan deemen anon riht,

When he fled,  
the Syrians and  
Galatians  
thought he had  
been killed, and  
started to  
pillage Asia,

That he that day was outh<sup>er</sup> taken or ded; 204

And Gallocrecs, a peep<sup>le</sup> of gret pouste,  
Of couetise gan haste hem ful gret speed  
Tentre Asie, & spoille al that contre.  
To Antiochus thei hadde eek enmyte, 208  
That he was fayn for his sauacioun  
To paie to them a ful gret raunsoun.

173. maad is] is made H. 195. of] for H.

205. Gallogreies H, Gallogreecs R 3, Gallocreis J, Gallogres H 5.

Ther herte was youe onli to pillage,  
 Takyng of hym of gold gret quantite,  
 And he, seyng of robyng the outrage,  
 Drouh to the pillours; & oon of them was he.  
 And thoruh al Asie thei robbed ech contre;  
 For Seleuchus thei gan so purchase,  
 That he nat durste abiden in no place.

and were joined  
 by Antiochus,  
 212 who paid them  
 a large ransom.

216

Than Antiochus drouh to Tholome,  
 Void of sauffconduit or any assuraunce,  
 Thouh that atween hem was gret enmyte  
 For a sesoun, as maad is remembraunce,  
 Tafounde socour in his gret greuaunce.  
 But al for nouht; for in conclusioun  
 Tholome hym took & cast in derk prisoun.

Seleucus was  
 pursued from  
 place to place;  
 and Antiochus  
 220 went to  
 Ptolemy  
 without a safe  
 conduct and  
 was put in  
 prison.

224

Ther constreyned of necessite,  
 Knowyng no mene to make[n] his raunsoun,  
 Bi a woman that lyued in pouerte  
 He was holp out of that merk prisoun.  
 Loo, heer of Fortune a fals condicioun,  
 That koude make a kyng withoute peere  
 Of a woman to stonden in daungeere!

A poor woman  
 helped him  
 escape, although  
 he was one of  
 the greatest of  
 228 kings!

228

To proude folk this may be a merour,  
 To seen a prince thus sodeynli brouht lowe,  
 That shon in richesse lik an emperour,  
 Which of disdeyn[e] list no man to knowe.  
 Now is he cast; now is he ouerthrowe;  
 Now hath he cause to pleyne, weepe & mourne,  
 Knowyng no freend for socour hym to tourne.

232 This should be  
 an example to  
 all proud  
 people.

236

He was afferd to holden his passage  
 Bi hih-weies, or for to kome in siht;  
 Fill among theues; & thei be gret outrage  
 Al merciles thei\* slouh hym anon riht.  
 And his brother, for al his gret[e] myht,  
 Callid Seleuchus, which was a gret[e] wonder,  
 Fill from his courseer & brak his nek assonder.

Afraid to travel  
 on the highway,  
 240 he was captured  
 and slain by  
 robbers. His  
 brother  
 Seleucus fell  
 off his horse  
 and broke his  
 neck.

244

211. hertes H.

213. robyng] robbery H, R 3, robbery H 5.

222. To haue founde J, P.

224. in derk] hym in H, R 3, H 5.

228. merk] dirke H, R 3, dyrke H 5, darke P.

242. thei] ther B.

[How the noble queene Leodomia was in the temple  
slayn, and vengeance taken/ vpon him that  
slouh hir.]<sup>1</sup>

Six princes and  
princesses next  
came before  
Bochas  
piteously  
weeping.

**S**IXE of estatis, princis & princessis,  
Shewed hem to Bochas pitousli pleynnyng,  
To hym declaryng ther mortal heuynessis; 248  
And first of alle ther cam to hym weepyng  
The noble queen, hir sorwes rehersyng,  
Cald Laodomya, which with ful heuy cheere  
Compleyned the myscheef of hir sustir deere, 252

The first of  
them was queen  
Laodameia, who  
complained  
that when  
her sister  
Nereis married  
the king of  
Sicily,

Callid Nereis, yong & tendre of age, [p. 262]  
That weddid was of Cicile to the kyng.  
And on the day of that gret mariage,  
Ther fill a stryff & a gret meuyng 256  
Among the comouns bamaner of risyng;  
That whan the queen[e] therof hadde a siht,  
To Dians\* temple anon she took hir fliht.

the commons  
rose in rebellion,  
and the two  
queens fled  
to the temple  
of Diana for  
protection.

The peple was parti, & roos ageyn the kyng; 260  
For which[e] rumour & the sodeyn striff,  
Laodomya, ful feerfulli quakyng,  
Ran to the temple for to saue hir lyff,  
Supposyng in hyr ymagynatiff, 264  
That for the templis chast[e] reuerence  
Men wolde spare to do ther violence.

Laodameia  
was slain  
before the  
altar by one  
Milo;

But ther was oon bi whom the striff began,  
And was first ground of this gret mocioun, 268  
Callid Milo, a fals Cicilian,  
Void of al reuerence & deuocioun.  
Ran to the temple fersere than leou'n,  
And wher the queen the auter dede enbrace, 272  
With a sharp suerd[e] slouh hir in the place.

but the gods  
and Diana  
punished his  
sacrilege.  
A great  
pestilence  
followed, and  
Milo went mad  
and slew  
himself on the  
twelfth day  
after.

This sacrilege was punished be vengeance;  
Goddis wer wroth with this gret offence.  
And Diana bi ful gret displesaunce 276  
Made in the contre a sodeyn pestilence;  
And Milo was bi vnwar violence  
Turnid bestial, maad wood in that affray,  
And slouh hymself [l]ff suyng the tuelfte day. 280

247. compleynnyng H. 249. to hym ther cam H, R 3, H 5.  
259. Dians] Dianis B, dyanyrs R 3, Dianes P. 260. peeple H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 106 recto.

[How\* Cleomens ky[ng] of Macedoyne was slayn  
with his wif and childre.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR this vengauce taken on Milo,  
Cam Cleomenes of Macedoyne kyng;  
And to Bochar gan shewe\* his dedli wo,  
His gret iniuries of enmyes assailyng,  
His hih emprises, his kyngdam defendyng,  
And aldirlast how he in his cite  
Was bi the sone slayn off Tholome.

Cleomenes, king  
of Macedonia,  
who was slain  
by the son  
of Ptolemy, next  
appeared to  
284 Bochar.

First in his contre, the stori doth deuise,  
Ageyn his enmyes he hadde a gret bataile,  
Of his people deffendyng the fraunchise  
Of knihtli prowesse, as he that list nat faile  
For his riht to fiht in plate & maile,  
His lieges echon beyng of assent  
To lyue and deie with hym in ther entent.

288 He defended  
his country  
against its  
enemies

Men and women, & childre yong of age  
Wern of oon herte as in this mateere,  
Which made hem strong & gaff\* gret auantage,  
That vndeuided thei stood echon ifeere  
Off o corage, off o will & o cheere,  
Gretli assurid in ther oppynyoun,  
Because among hem was no dyuysioun.

292

and had the  
support of all  
296 his people,  
for there was  
no division  
among them.

Ther comoun proffit thei dede mor preferre  
Than thei dede tresour, lyff or good;  
For ther fredam ay redi to the werre,  
Nat afferd\* to spende ther owne blood.  
And fynali togidre so\* thei stood,  
That of o thouht ech gan hym redi make,  
To lyue and deie for his brothres sake.

300

They preferred  
their common  
good to all  
304 other things  
and were not  
afraid to shed  
their blood for  
their country.

Thei\* hadde an enmy born of that regeoun,  
The name of whom was Antigonus;  
And he had weddid, the book makth menciuon,  
The olde queen of kyng Demetrius,

308

Their enemy  
was Antigonus,  
who had  
312 married the old  
queen of king  
Demetrius and  
usurped the

283. to shewe B. 285. kyndam H.

297. gaff] gat B, J, gate P.

299. 2nd off] om. H.

305. offerd B.

306. so togidre B, J, P, H, H 5.

308. brothis H.

309. Thei] That B, J, H 5, Than R 3.

MS. J. leaf 106 verso — How] His J.

crown of Sparta  
in behalf of her  
son Philip;

And hadde hir sone, the stori tellith thus,  
Callid Phelipp, for youthe in his keepyng,  
Therbi pretending a title to be kyng.

but he was  
put out of  
the kingdom  
for all his  
presumption.

Off Lacedemonois cleymed ageyn riht 316  
Ther to regne & take pocioune,  
Lik a tiraunt vsurpyng of gret myht,  
For to be crowned in that regeoun.  
But for al his fals presumpcioun 320  
He was put of and Iset a-ferre,  
Thouh he with hem heeld a [ful] mortal werre.

Cleomenes  
was in the  
battlefeld  
every day,  
hardy as a lion.

And Cleomenes that was rihtful kyng 324  
Was in the feeld[e] armyd eueri day,  
Hardi as leoun, dradde hym [in] nothyng,  
Geyn his enmyes he stood so at a-bay,  
That from the feeld he maad hem fleen away:  
His dreedful suerd grounden was so keene, 328  
That tabide hym [thei] myhte nat susteene.

Finally he  
weariet of  
the constant  
warfare and  
thought it  
would be best  
to have peace

And on a day diffendyng his cite,  
Heeld in the feeld[e] a ful strong bataille;  
With litil people made his foon to fleen, 332  
Retournyng hom ful weri of trauaille,  
Thouhte in his herte that it sholde auaille  
To stynte the werre hangyng in noun certeyn,  
Til that his peple refresshid wer ageyn. 336

until his peple  
had recovered.  
Leaving his  
country well  
guarded, he  
went to Egypt  
with his wife  
and children  
and lived there  
until Ptolemy's  
death.

Set ordenaunce thoruh al the contre [p. 263]  
Geyn al enmyes to make resistence;  
And into Egypt he goth to Tholome,  
With wiff & childre withdrawing his presence. 340  
Ther reseuyed with gret benyuolence  
Lich his estat, out of care & dreed,  
And ther abood til Tholome was\* ded.

But afterwards  
Ptolemy's son  
slew him and  
all his family,  
a strange and  
cruel thing to  
do.

But the sone of kyng Tholome, 344  
Which regnid aftir bi successioun,  
Of fals envie & vengable cruelte  
Slouh Cleomenes in that regeoun,  
His wiff & childre, void of compassioun. 348  
Alas, it was to straunge a cruel thyng,  
Withynne his\* kyngdam to moordre so a kyng.

326. ageyn H.

329. That] For H. R 3, H 5 — thei] om. R 3.

338. ageyn H.

343. was] wer B, J. 350. his] a B, J, P.



[Of kyng Yero\*, Cornelie, and Hanybal.]<sup>1</sup>

- A**FFTIR whos deth þus wrouht bi violence,  
 [As] the stori remembreth procedyng, 352  
 Foorth cam Yero & shewed his presence,  
 Of Siracuse the myhti stronge kyng,  
 Tofor Bochas ful pitousli pleynyng,  
 Besechyng hym with a ful pitous cheere 356  
 Of his myscheef to writen the maneere.
- The which Yero, wilful & furious,  
 List to presume of fals rebellious  
 For to debate with Appius Claudius, 360  
 And to maligne ageyn[es] Rome town.  
 But he anon for his presumpcioun  
 Constreynd was, in al his moste pride,  
 Lik a coward to fleen & nat abide. 364
- No mor of hym myn auctour writeth heer,  
 But in his book[e] as he doth proceede,  
 ¶ Ther cam Cornelie, of Rome a consuleer,  
 Hymself compleynyng of the gret falsheede 368  
 Which onto hym acomplished was in deede,  
 Bassuraunce broke, of olde Hanybal,  
 Which of Cartage was cheeff admyral.
- To this Cornelie Hanybal was sworn  
 With the Affricanes bamaner flaterie,  
 To socoure hym, as I\* ha[ue] tolde toforn,  
 With the Romeyns to holde up his partie.  
 But whan thei mette, the book doth specefie, 376  
 Corneli take & fetrid in prisoun,  
 At myscheeff deied; ther geyned no raunsoun.
- Than Hanybal entred of entent  
 With his knihtis inta gret cite  
 Of Cicile callid Agrigent,  
 Wher Iulius Silua, of old enmyte,  
 Leid a siege with a gret meyne,  
 That he constreynd the saide Hanybal 384  
 For verray hunger to lepe ouer the wal.
- Bi a posterne he took hym to the fliht,  
 Gadred shippis & took the Large Se.  
 And Iulius Silua, lik a manli kniht, 388

Hiero of  
 Syracuse  
 besought  
 Bochas to write  
 the manner of  
 his misfortune.

He rebelled  
 against Rome  
 and fought with  
 Appius  
 Claudius,  
 and was com-  
 pelled to flee  
 like a coward.  
 Bochas wrote  
 no more about  
 him.

Cornelius, a  
 Roman consul,  
 came next and  
 complained  
 of the deceit of  
 Hannibal,  
 admiral of  
 Carthage, who  
 swore to sup-  
 port him  
 against Rome,  
 and then let  
 him die in  
 prison.

Hannibal was  
 afterwards  
 besieged by  
 Julius Silva in  
 Agrigentum,  
 whence taking  
 flight, he  
 escaped by sea  
 and was finally  
 stoned to death  
 by his knights.

368. of] on H. 371. Amyrall H. 374. I] we B, J.

MS. J. leaf 107 recto. Yero] Nero J.

Fauht with hym, & made hym for to flee,  
 Vpon the watir; [&] anon aftir he  
 Was of his knihtes stoned to the deth,  
 And so constreyned he yald up the breth.

392

[Off the Duk zantipus/ cast in to see.]<sup>1</sup>

After Hannibal  
 was slain. Duke  
 Xanthippus of  
 Sparta appeared.

**A** FFTIR that Hanybal was slay[e]n thus  
 And put to flih[t], as maad is mencioum,  
 Tofor Bochas cam worthi Zantipus,  
 A famous duk, ful notable off renoun.  
 And he was lord of the strong regioun  
 Lacedemoyne, & was com from a-ferre  
 Into Cartage to help hem in the werre.

396

He helped  
 Carthage against  
 Rome and  
 captured  
 Marcus Regulus.

Bi whos prowesse, to his ences of glorie,  
 The proud[e] Romeyns wer put to the fliht;  
 Cartagynensis hadde of them victorie.  
 And ther was take the wise manli kniht  
 Marchus Regulus, & brouht anon riht  
 Into Cartage, & lad as prisoneer  
 Bi Zantipus, as Bochas writeth heer.

400

404

But for all his  
 high prowesse,  
 the  
 Carthaginians  
 envied him and  
 cast him into  
 the sea when  
 he sailed home  
 in one of their  
 ships.

This noble duk, for al his hih prowessis  
 Doon in Cartage & shewed to ther toun,  
 And for al his notable kyndenesis,  
 Thei most vnkyndeli quit hym his guerdoun;  
 For sailyng hom toward his regioun,  
 In a shipp stuffid of ther contre,  
 Of fals envie thei cast hym in the se.

408

412

Yet his name  
 will remain in  
 the House of  
 Fame always.

To his noblesse and famous cheualrie,  
 Whan he of knihthod sat hiest in his flours,  
 Thei of Cartage of\* hatreede & envie  
 Maligned ageyn hym, cheeff sonne of ther socours,  
 Taclipsed his lih[t]: but therageyn auctours  
 Han be writyng perpetueli set his name  
 And it registred in the Hous of Fame.

416

420

393. slayen] I slayn R 3, yslein P, Islayn H 5.

394. And] First H.

398. com] comen H.

413. thei] that H — the] om. H.

416. of] be B, H 5, bi J, R 3, by P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 107 recto.

[How Marchus Regulus, of his fre wil deied for  
the comon wele.]<sup>1</sup>

**W**HO can reherse or telle\* the ground of  
werris, [p. 264] Who can tell  
The firste cause of such mortal outrage\* — why wars first  
Wher it began bynfluence of sterris began? Was it  
Tween man and man, or of wilful rage, by the influence  
As atween Romeyns & folkis of Cartage, of the stars or  
To gret hyndryng, considered the maneere, the wilful rage  
Of bothe parties, as bookis doth us lere. of man?

Italiens therwith wer greued ofte, 428 Both the  
Namli whan Fortune was ther aduersarie. Italiens and the  
And Affrican[els] felte ful vnsofte, Africans  
Whan she to them list to be contrarie, — suffered from  
Whos cours of custum stoundemeel doth varie, 432 the variance of  
Bexperience it hath be preued weel, Fortune,  
In the ouerwhelmyng of hir vntrusti wheel.

The moste worthi & the moste famous, to-day  
Afforn remembrid upon ech partie, 436 victorious,  
Fortune to-day made hem victorious, to-morrow  
And to-morwe she dede ther myht deffie. vanquished.

Now up, now down; al stood in iupartie, 440  
Lik as she list them faouere, nih or ferre,  
Ther losse, ther wynnyng callid fortune of werre.

To summe weelwillid, happi & eurous, Marcus  
To summe also ful straunge of aqueyntaunce; Regulus, a  
Rekne among othir Marcus Regulus, 444 great Roman  
On Romeyn parti a prince of gret substaunce, prince,  
To be preferrid & put in remembraunce,  
Oon the most worthi & trewe founde in deede 448  
Of knihtli policie that I can of reede.

To comoun proffit was ay his aduertence, was one of  
Tween loue & hate stondyng so vpriht, the most just  
To nouter side declyned the ballaunce and upright  
Of his doomys, for faouour of no wiht, 452 of men.

Til that the eie off his inward siht  
Conceyued hadde wher the trouthe stood:  
Than gaff he sentence; & theron he abood.

421. reherse or telle] telle or Rehërse B. 422. outrages B.

427. doth] don H, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 107 recto.

- In all this world there was no better knight,— well-born, handsome, and of great courage and strength. In al this world ther was no bettir kniht, Bettir named & born of good lynage, A semli persone, delyuer & of gret myht, Hardi as leoun, riht manli off visage, Wal of the Romeyns, sharp yerd to Cartage, Demure, nat hasti, seyng al thyng toform; And in Papynia I fynde that he was born. 456
- For his discretion he was chosen consul, And for he hadde so gret discrecioun, This worthi kniht, this Marcus Regulus, Chosen he was a consul of the toun, And hadde a felawe callid Manlius, In armys manli, wis and vertuouus. Which for ther expert notable\* hih constaunce Of Romeyn werris hadde the gouernaunce. 464
- and together with Manlius he defeated the Sicilians and Hamilcar, constable of Carthage, Ther shippis stuffed, maad a gret arme, Ful prudentli with knihtli apparaille Thes princis tweyne taken han the se; First with Sicilians hadde a gret bataille, Discounfited hem, & at ther arryuaille Outraied Amulchar, the stori is no fable, That was of Affrik capteyn & constable. 472
- and sent great plunder and many prisoners to Rome. Gat in that contre castellis many on, Took prisoneres, stuff & gret richesse; And al that pray\* to Roome he sente anon Bi Manlius, the stori berth witnessse. And the Romeyns for his worthynesse, Alle of assent, because he was so wis, Prolongid han the terme off his offis. 476
- No one was equal to him in knighthood; and he became governor of Africa and Carthage. Off knihtli noblesse was non onto hym lik, Nouthir in armys nor politik ordenaunce; And for the conquest off Cartage & Affrik, To hym thei gaff of bothe the gouernaunce. Brouht citees, toun[e]s to the obeissaunce\* Of the Romeyns, this noble worthi kniht, Wher-euer he rood, maugre ther foos myht. 488
- He conquered all the neighbouring countries, Be his feithful laborious dilligence Gat al the contres to Cartage toun, 492

456. al] *om.* H. 468. notable expert B, J, R 3, P.  
 477. that] *pe* H. 479. pray] *parti* B, *partie* J.  
 484. R *begins again bere.* 487. the] *om.* H.  
 488. the obeissaunce] *his obeissaunce* B, R, J.  
 493. vnto] *to* H.

Til tidyngis cam vnto his presence, and killed a  
horrible serpent  
Beside a ryuer ther was a gret dragoun,  
So horrible, as maad is mencioun,  
That al the contre of hym stood in such doute, 496  
No man durste neihhe hym ferre aboute.

An hundred feet & tueyne was his lengthe,  
Lik as writeth Titus Lyuyus. that was one  
hundred and  
two feet long.

Was non so hardi, nor no man\* of such strengthe 500

That durste approche; he was so venymous.

But bi the manhod of Marchus Regulus

Islay[e]n was this monstrous serpent,

And for a merueil the skyn to Rome sent. 504

Thus in conquest whil he dede his peyne [p. 265] He also  
defeated the  
two Hasdrubals

To gete castellis & myhti stronge touns,

Geyn hym wer sent Astruballis tweyne,

Callid of Affrik the hardi champiouns, 508

With al the poweer of ther regiouns.

But as the stori maketh rehersaile,

Thei wer discourfited bothen in bataile.

Amulchar aftir cam with spere & sheeld 512 and Hamilcar.

In diffence of Affrik & Cartage;

And he was also distrussed in the feeld

With al his host[e], maugre his visage.

Thus Marchus hadde alway thauauntage, 516

Makyng the Romeyns, this kniht most vertuous,

Thoruh hih\* prowesse to be victorious.

And wher that he in his tendre age

List to laboure & tile his owne lond, 520 In his youth  
he had tilled  
his own land,  
but now he  
rode through  
Africa armed  
in bright steel.

For exercise & vertuous auauntage

To holde the plouh & leede it with his hond,

Auoidyng slouthe, as ye shal vndirstond, —

Now thoruh al Affrik with many worthi kniht 524

He rideth armed in steel & mailles briht.

496. stood] om. R.

498. hundrith H.

500. so] om. H, R — nor no man] man nor B, R, J.

503. was] as R.

506. gete] gret R.

507. hastruballis H.

510. the] ther H.

512. Amilchar P.

514. distrussed] distressed J, distressed P.

518. hih] his B, R, J, P. 522. leede] losne H.

525] In steel and mailles he rideth armed bright J, P — maile H.

- And whenever he fought he was victorious. A golden crown of laurel and a robe of victory were kept for him in Rome. The laurel, which never fades, is granted to conquerors;
- This noble Mark, what-euer he hadde ado,  
He was in armys soueryn synguleer;  
And in the temple at Rome of Appollo 528  
For hym was kept a crowne of fressh laureer,  
Forgid of gold, fret ful of stonis cleer:  
And in the temple of Iouis was reserued  
A robe of victorie, which he hath disserued. 532
- To these goddis, who can considre weel,  
Of old custum ther rihtis to meynsteene,  
As for a thyng beyng perpetuel,  
Which fadeth neuere of nature, thus I meene, 536  
Isacrid is the fressh[e] laureer greene:  
For causis tweyne grauntid to conquerours,  
In marcial actis bi conquest maad victours.
- for it betokens wisdom, long perseverance in virtue, and foresight.
- For the noblesse of this tre dyuyne 540  
Sheweth [bi] his odour in wisdam excellence;  
Bi the grennesse, which neuere doth declyne,  
Long abidyng of vertuous prudence;  
The rounde crowne betokneth prouidence, 544  
In signe onli, al knihtli gouernaunce  
Taketh his guerdoun of long contynuaunce.
- Their strength alone does not entitle them to a crown, nor does a proud beginning establish their glory.
- Ther strengthe onli graunteth hem nat the crowne,  
Nor a proud gynnyng stablisseth nat per glorie, 548  
But perseueraunce, who list muse or\* rowne,  
Graunteth to them & putteth in memorie  
The triumphe & palme of ther victorie,  
The crowne of laureer, in stori it is told, 552  
And of Iubiter the riche robe of gold.
- Thus Regulus was honoured by the Romans,
- Who can disserne, of alle thes giftes thre,  
Most apparteneth onto cheualrie,  
Manli prowesse, wisdam, anon lat see, 556  
Strengthe, hardynesse, conquest, policie? —  
For the Romeyns kauhte a fantasie,  
For his meritis notable & glorious  
To magnefie this Marcus Regulus. 560

526. ado] to do R.

532. robe] robbe H.

541. bi] om. J — excellence] &amp; excellence R, J.

548. begynnyng H.

549. or] &amp; B, R.

554. disserne] discern H, discern J, R 3, descerne P.

For this Marcus duryng his lusti yeeris  
 Prynce of the werris geyn Affrik & Cartage,  
 Took alle ther yonge knihtis prisoneeris,  
 Sent hem to Rome for comoun auantage. and during the  
years of his  
prime he took  
all the young  
knights of  
Carthage  
prisoner.  
 But O, alas! whan he was falle in age, 564  
 The geri goddesse, among hir chaunges alle,  
 Ageyn this prince hir fauour made appalle.

For to withstonde the prowesse of this kniht,  
 In helpe of Affrik, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>, 568  
 Cam Zantipus, of whom I spak now riht,  
 A myhti duk, the which[e] was sent down  
 Fro Lacedemoy<sup>n</sup>; which thuruh his hih renou<sup>n</sup>, 572  
 Whan the poweer of Marchus gan to faille,  
 His mene slay[e]n, took hym in bataille,—

Into Cartage sent hym prisoneer;  
 And ther he lay in stronge cheynys bounde. 576  
 Loo, how Fortune chaunge can hir cheer,  
 Falsest of trust whan she is most iocounde;  
 First fauourable, aftir froward founde:  
 This hir maner with hir double face, 580  
 Folk that sit hiest to chaunge hem fro ther place.

For he that whilom hadde in subiecciou<sup>n</sup>  
 Almost al Affrik, & Cartage the cite,  
 Now lith he bounde & fetrid in prisoun, 584  
 Whilom in glorie, now in aduersite,  
 Cast in miserie from hih prosperite.  
 Fortunis fauours be maad, who looke weel,  
 Of brotel glas rather than of steel. 588

This manli kniht, al-be that he lay cheyned, [p. 266] 592  
 Which had brouht Rome to so hih encres,  
 That thei of Affrik & Cartage wer constreyned  
 Vnto the Romeyns to pursue for a pes;  
 And for tacomplisshe this mateer dout[e]les,  
 Vndir assuraunce made in Cartage tou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Thei took[e] Marcus anon out of prisoun.

Bounde bi his oth, ther is no mor to seyn,  
 He to be chaungid for Affrik prisoneris; . 596  
 Ther for tabide, & thei to come ageyn,  
 The yonge knihtis, fressh lusti of ther cheeris.

563. ther] the R. 580. 1st hir] his R.  
 590. to] vp to H, R 3.

- So that Marchus, feeble & old of yeeris, 600  
 Bi Affrican[e]s was to Rome sent,  
 Bi oth assured, tacomplishe ther entent.
- The Romans valued him more  
 than all their prisoners of  
 Carthage, For the Romeyns hadde in such deynte  
 This noble Mark for manhod & prudence, 604  
 And for the foorthryng of ther comounte,  
 Thei hadde his persone for wisdam in reuerence,  
 Cald of that toun ther wal & ther diffence,  
 Hadde in mor cheerte for knyhtod in that age 608  
 Than al ther prisoneris of Affrik & Cartage.
- and rejoiced at  
 his deliverance. Romeyns gretli reioisshed of his comyng,  
 And speciali for his delyueraunce;  
 Alle attonis, of herte & trewe menyng, 612  
 Saide, "wolcom hom, our ioie, our\* suffisaunce,  
 Wolcome, merour of knihtli gouernaunce!"  
 This was ther vois & this was ther langage  
 At his repair from Affrik & Cartage. 616
- Received with  
 cries of welcome,  
 and presented  
 to the Senate,  
 he said: And thus resceyued lik to his estat  
 And conveied thoruh al the cite,  
 Nobli presentid up to the senat,  
 Began his tale, anon as ye shal see, 620  
 As he that hadde mor in cheer[i]te  
 The comoun proffit than his delyueraunce,  
 Saide onto them these woordes in substaunce:
- "Sirs, I was sent as prince  
 and consul to  
 Africa. Seven  
 years have I  
 been there  
 chastising the  
 rebels of that  
 country. "Sires, be thauys of you echon present, 624  
 First bi thestatis, next bi the comounte,  
 As prince & consul to Affrik I was sent;  
 And, as ye knowe, seueue yeer I haue ther be  
 To chastise rebellis of that contre, 628  
 And bi the fauour & helpe of Goddis myht,  
 To your cite aquit me lik a kniht.
- "I am now  
 grown old.  
 Fortune is no  
 longer favour-  
 able to me;  
 and the people  
 of Carthage wish  
 me to be sold  
 in exchange for  
 your prisoners. In this mateer it needeth nat to tarie,  
 Ye knowe yoursilff I am now wexen old, 632  
 And Fortune is to me contrarie,  
 Wherbi your enmyes in Affrik be maad bold.  
 And thei desire me for to be sold  
 In eschaung, bi short conclusioun, 636  
 For prisoneres which ye\* haue in the toun.

609. ther] be H.

612. trewe] of H, R 3, H 5. 613. our] &amp; our B, R, J.

627. And] om. H — I haue ther] there I haue J, P.

637. ye] thei B, H, R, J, R 3 — the] pis H, this R 3, P.



And bi the fauour of goddis hih in heuene,  
 And bi my felawes wis mediacioun,  
 Contrees, provynces, mo than sixe or seuene 640  
 I haue in Affrik maad subiect to this toun,  
 Maugre ther myht & ther rebelloun,  
 And them constreynd, lik as ye desire,  
 For tobeie vnto your empire. 644

To make your lordship\* mor statli glorious,  
 And tencece the boundis of your cite,  
 Whilom bi grace I was victorious,  
 Venquissed your enmyes wher-euer I dede hem  
 see; 648

Now thoruh Fortunis mutabilite  
 Maad vnhappi & desolat of cheer, —  
 Sumtyme a prince & now a prisoner.

Afforn, my poweer bi Fortune was fraunchised, 652  
 Now am I thrall & fetrid in prisoun;  
 Myn olde triumphes be neweli now disguised,  
 And [my] victories oppressid & bor down.  
 With this considered the transmutacioun 656  
 Of youthe passid & myn vnweeldi age,  
 Lital wonder thouh dul be my corage.

Yit ther is a thyng that draweth along my lyff,  
 Which in myn herte hath sette gret gladnesse: 660  
 To your encres how in this mortal striff  
 Bi my labour & knihtli bisynesse  
 The marcial princis, famous in worthynesse,  
 With al the knihtis most soueryn of renoun 664  
 Souht thoruh Affrik, be now in your prisoun.

Bi whos absence feeblid is Cartage;  
 The contre porisshed, brouht to disencres.  
 Seyng that I am dul and falle in age 668  
 Geyn Affricans to put my-silff in pres,  
 Causyng your enmyes [to] pursue for the pes  
 Beschauung of me, that may but smal auaille,  
 For Affrik knihtis most expert in bataille. 672

"Once I was a prince and victorious; but now I am a prisoner of war.

"My former triumphs are transformed, my victories borne down, my youth passed.

"Yet it cheers me to know that through my labour you have the best knights of Africa in your prison,

which weakens your enemies. They now ask to have them back again in exchange for me,

641. this] his R.  
 645. lordship] Empire B, R, J.  
 655. &] an R.  
 659. a thyng] a nothir H, R 3 — that] om. J — along] a length P.  
 671. of] for H, R 3.  
 672. Affrik] be Affrik H, þaffrike R 3, the Auffryk H 5.

- so that they  
may begin  
a new war  
on your city.      Thei stonde in hope of ther delyueraunce [p. 267]  
Beschauing of me, now sent out of prisoun,  
Of entent tencrecen ther puissaunce,  
Of newe to gynne a werre upon your toun.      676  
Now taketh good heed, & of discrecioun  
Peiseth of prudence this thyng that I haue told,  
Ther youthe considred, & I am feeble & old.
- "I am feeble  
and old, they  
lusty and fresh;      I am consumyd & wered in the werris;      680  
Fortune contrarie, I feeble to bere armure:  
Thei lusti fressh, ther name spredde ful ferr is,  
And in the feeld thei able to endure.  
I vnweldi, & lik a creature      684  
Mor sembl[abl]e to drawe hom to my graue,  
Than to be armyd this cite for to saue.
- and I am more  
anxious for the  
profit of your  
commonwealth  
than for my  
own deliverance.      And in effect, I haue mor cheer[i]te,  
Of verray feith withoute variaunce,      688  
Vnto the profit of your comounte  
Than to the mateer of my delyueraunce;  
Too thynges peised & weied in ballaunce:  
Of Affrik knyhtis thexpert worthynesse,      692  
In me the constreynt off agis feebilnesse.
- "I cannot do  
better than die  
for the  
community."      And to conclude upon this mateer,  
I myhte neuere, as semeth onto me,  
As of kniethod disseruen the laureer      696  
Nor the tryumphe in this famous cite,  
Bet than deie tencrece the comounte,  
And thus auised, of herte & hool corage  
Yeld up the sperit of myn vnweeldi age."      700
- Persevering in  
this intention,      In this purpos, he, stedfast as a wall,  
Of o will and oon perseueraunce,  
Hymself comendyng to goddis inmortal,  
Ches for to deie off politik constauce,      704  
And to preferre bi notable purueyaunce  
The comoun profit: this was his motiff, —  
Set aside good, tresour and his lyff.
- he returned to  
Carthage a  
prisoner.      Riht weel cheerid, stable of his visage,      708  
Of parfit loue he hadde onto the toun,  
He is repaired ageyn onto Cartage,

676. newe] now R. 677. taketh] take H.

682. name] fame H, R 3, H 5.

685. semblable] seembly R.

702. oon] o H. 710. onto] in to H.

Tharticles kept and the condicioun  
 At the departyng from Affrik regioun: 712  
 This to seyne, texpleite ther lust certeyne,  
 Or prisoneer he to resorte ageyn.  
 At his departyng the Romeyn senatours  
 Gan wexe pale off compassioun, 716  
 To seen the paufs of al ther old socours  
 As prisoneer departe out of the toun.  
 Princessis, ladies fill a-swowne doun;  
 Childre wepte & cried for pite, 720  
 "Farweel upholdere, cheeff wal of our\* cite!"  
 Was euer founde any trewer kniht?  
 Which of his owne feithful mocioun,  
 Wher he was free, & poweer hadde & myht, 724  
 Taue stonde at large bi his eleccioun,  
 To keepe his promis repaired to prisoun!  
 What shal I write of his noblesse or shewe? —  
 To fynde oon lik hym, I reede but of a fewe! 728  
 And whan he cam ageyn with his massage,  
 Knowyng thentent of this worthi knyht,  
 Most furiousli the people of Cartage,  
 In the presence of euery maner wiht, 732  
 Ordeyned han a torment anon riht.  
 First the liddis of his eien tweyne,  
 Thei kutte hem of to encrece his peyne,  
 That he nat sholde slepen in prisoun, 736  
 But euer wache with peyne intollerable,  
 And for the constreynt of his passioun  
 Crie & compleyne with sihhis lamentable.  
 And aftir this, thei token a pleyn table, 740  
 Fret ful of nailles sharp[e] whet & grounde,\*  
 And therupon naked thei hym bounde.  
 Another table thei leide on hym aloffte,  
 Nailed also; and atween thes tweyne 744  
 Thei couchid hym; his\* bed was ful vnsoffte,  
 Most importable, so hidous was the peyne;  
 The blood ran out of eueri senew & veyne.  
 This was his torment, alas, a cruel deth! — 748  
 Of worthi Marchus til he yald up the breth.

At his departure  
 the Roman  
 Senators grew  
 pale with  
 compassion,  
 princesses and  
 ladies fell down  
 in a swoon and  
 the children  
 wept.

Never was there  
 a truer knight.

The people of  
 Cartage,  
 furious in their  
 disappointment,  
 tortured him  
 by cutting off  
 his eyelids,

and bound him  
 naked to a  
 table studded,  
 with sharp  
 nails,

beneath another  
 nailed table,  
 and let him  
 lie there till  
 he died.

711. tharticle H. 712. At] And R. 721. our] ther B, J, R.

728. reede but of] fynde but P — of] om. P.

729. his] this H. 741. grounde] Igrounde B, R, J.

745. his] this B, R, J, R 3, P.

- Who ever read  
of such a  
steadfast prince? Who radde in bookes or euer dede see  
Of any princis so stedfast & so stable  
As whilom wern in Rome the cite, 752  
Or in ther conquest so longe perdurable,  
On vertu foundid, of corage vnchaungable!  
Rekne up alle that euer wer in that toun,  
And to this Marchus mak no comparisoun. 756
- Regulus  
eclipses the glory  
of the Camilli,  
Papirii, Scipios,  
of Curtius and  
Fabricius, Reke Kamylls, Papires, Scipiouns, [p. 268]  
Notable worthi for many gret victorie;  
Rekne up alle ther othir\* champiouns,  
Cursius, Fabricus famous of memorie. 760  
But this Regulus eclipseth al ther glorie  
And surmounteth, bi report of renoun,  
Al thes forsaide in comparisoun.
- of the rich  
Lucius, Scaurus,  
Caius Delius,  
Emilius, Reke up the foure that whilom wer so riche, 764  
The firste of them callid Lucius,  
Other tweyne of condicioun liche,  
As was Scavrus & Gayus Delius;  
And forget nat the grete Emelius, — 768  
But for al ther gret pecessioun,  
Make to Marchus no comparisoun.
- and Crassus,  
whose throat  
the Assyrians  
poured full of  
molten gold. Remembre on Crassus, of whom it is told,  
The Assiriens to staunche his couetise 772  
Pored in his throte, strangled hym with gold;  
So he deide, the stori doth devise.  
And thouth thes foure wendyn ha be wise,  
Gretli comendid thoruh fals oppynoun, 776  
Of them to Marchus mak no comparisoun.
- He left his  
freedom and  
wealth behind  
him and died  
for the welfare  
of his country. Touchyng this Mark, lat men beholde & see:  
He leffte his tresour, his fredam & richesse,  
And for the proffit of the comounte 780  
Forsook his freendis, Bochas berth witnessse;  
To foorthre his toun deied in distresse,  
To keepe his feith resorted to prisoun, —  
Mak of non othir to hym comparisoun. 784

752. in] in the R.

759. othir] worthi B, R, J.

762. of] &amp; H, R 3, H 5.

766. condiciouns H.

771, 72 are transposed in R.

771. on] of R.

Myn auctour heer put in remembraunce  
 Summe that hadde gold, stonis & perre,  
 Summe that hadde of richesse habundaunce,  
 And of othir that stood in dignite,  
 And summe that hadde worldli prosperite, —  
 Set al aside, & conclude on resoun,  
 Tween them & Marchus is no comparisoun.

Some men had  
 great riches;  
 others stood in  
 high dignity, or  
 in worldly  
 prosperite.  
 788 Make no  
 comparison  
 between them  
 and Marcus.

Princis may lyue aftir ther ententis,  
 Aftir ther lustis, after ther delices,  
 Of gold & purple were riche garnementis,  
 Aftir ther poweer frowardli in vices,  
 Graunte ther mynistris in cites gret offices, —  
 Tween al ther pompe & veyn ambicioun  
 And atween Mark mak no comparisoun.

792 Princes may live  
 according to  
 their desires and  
 wear rich  
 garments of  
 gold and purple;  
 but between all  
 their pomp and  
 vain ambition  
 796 and Marcus  
 make no  
 comparison.

Alle these thynges remembred in certeyn,  
 Weel considred & Iput in mynde,  
 Ther wer\* in Rome but fewe such[e] seyn,  
 To comoun profit that founde wer\* so kynde.  
 And, til I may such another fynde  
 In al this book[e], turnyng up-so-doun,  
 I will to hym make no comparisoun.

Nor will I do  
 so until I find  
 800 another such.

804

## [Lenvoye.]

**T**HIS tragedie, who þat can take heede,  
 Is entermedlid with wo & gladnesse:  
 Ioie for [the] worshep & synguler manhede  
 That was in Mark bi excellent noblesse;  
 To reede his fall it is gret heynesse,  
 Which ches to deie, wher-as he stood[e] fre,  
 Onli for profit of the comounte.

In this tragedy  
 are mingled joy  
 for the manhood  
 of Marcus and  
 808 sorrow for  
 his fall.

812

To keepe his oth, pleynli, as I reede,  
 Maad in Cartage, ther beyng in distresse,  
 This noble prince constreyned off no neede,  
 But of fre will, myn auctour doth expresse,  
 Fro Rome ageyn[e] thidir gan hym dresse  
 To suffre torment, off his free volunte,  
 Onli for profit of the comounte.

Of his own free  
 will he chose to  
 die for the  
 profit of the  
 community.

816

786. perre] peerle H. 789. And] of H, R 3.  
 790. aside] on side H. 801. wer] was B, R, J, P.  
 802. wer] was, B, R, J. 808. the] om. R.

His story should  
be crowned with  
golden letters,

This stori sholde crowned been in deede 820

With golden lettres, for to bern witnessse,

How [the] seid Mark, hauyng of deth no dreede,

To sette Rome fro werre in sekirnesse, —

Whos hih renoun, most souereyn of prowesse, 824

May neuer eclipse bi non antiquite,

Which ches to deie to foorthre the comounte.

and he deserved  
the reward of  
triumph, the  
garment of  
purple fret with  
precious stones  
and the laureate  
wreath of  
victors.

He disserued for to han the meede

Of tryumphe and marcial worthynesse, 828

And of Iubiter to were the purpil weede,

Fret ful of stonis, most heuenli of brihtnesse,

The laureat crown conseruyng his grennesse,

Graunted to victours, who list considre & see, — 832

Which ches to deie to foorthre the comounte.

Noble Princes,  
who govern the  
people of this  
world, take heed  
to this story,  
and let Marcus  
be to you a  
mirror.

Noble Princis, which that gouerne & leede

Al worldli peeple, taketh heed in your hyhnesse

To this stori, trewe as is the creede, 836

Takyng exaample, doth your bisynesse

Ay to supporte & meyneteene rihtwisesse,

And lat Marchus to you a merour be,

Which ches to deie to foorthre the comounte. 840

[How Tholome kyng of Egipt callid Philopater slouh  
fader & moder & his wif in lechery spende his  
lif & mischeuesly ended.]<sup>1</sup>

Next in order,  
Ptolemy  
Philopator, who  
slew his father,  
mother and  
sister, appeared  
complaining to  
Bochas.

**N**EXT to Bochas in ordre compleynyng, [p. 269]

Vicious of lyff, ther cam Tholome

Cald Philopater, & was of Egipt kyng.

In tendre age borrible cruelte 844

Slouh fader, mooder & suster, ye may see,

He to be crownid, it is maad mencionn,

To regne allone in that regeoun.

He was inclined  
to every vice,  
and murdered his  
wife and spent  
his youth in  
riot and outrage.

He was disposed onto eueri vice, 848

Froward to vertu & to al doctryne,

Slouh his wiff callid Erudice,

Lefft his spouse, took a concubyne,

Wasted his lyff, gan hymself enclyne 852

To al riot, surfet & outrage;

And in this wise he spent his yonge age.

822. the] om. J.

841. in ordre to Bochas R 3, P. 843. &] that P, H 5.

844. borrible] horrible R, bi horrible H, J, R 3, be horryble,  
H 5, by horrible P. 848. onto] to H. 850. Euridice P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 109 recto.

Thus was disclaundred his roial mageste,  
 In lecherous lustis wachched al [the] niht,  
 A-bedde til noon, ageyn al honeste,  
 Of fals excesse shoop hym anon riht,  
 Whan he aroos, to drynke\* ageyn[e]s myht  
 Gorge upon gorge tafforce his lecherie.  
 The longe day he spente in glotonye.

856 Against all  
 decency he lay  
 abed till noon,  
 and stuffed and  
 drank until  
 night to fortify  
 his lust.

I wexe weri the processe for to write  
 Of this tiraunt, vicious and wood.  
 It is contagious the processe to endite,  
 Because thexample doth harm & no good.  
 And of vengauunce thus with hym it stood:  
 Of sodeyn myscheeff I reede he dide fyne,  
 Enbracid in armys of his concubyne.

860

864 It is tiresome  
 and odious to  
 write about  
 this tyrant.  
 His example  
 does harm and  
 no good. He  
 died suddenly  
 in the arms of  
 his concubine,  
 Agathoclea; and  
 868 she and her  
 son and all  
 their kin were  
 afterwards  
 hanged.

Agothodia pleynli was hir name,  
 And hadde a sone callid Agathodes,  
 Vicious bothe & sclaundrid bi diffame,  
 Noised by report, thei wer so rek[e]les.  
 Bothe attonis take in a sodeyn pres,  
 With ther allies alle attonis fett,  
 And bi iust doom lad to the gibett.

872

[How Abithomarus & viridomarus dukis of Fraunce,  
 aftir grete batailes bi Romayns were slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

**N**EXT Philopater, callid Tholome,  
 Per cam in ordre a worthi duk of Fraunce,  
 Abitomarus; & out of that contre  
 Rood into Grece with a gret puissaunce.  
 And first he gan to make his ordenaunce  
 Ageyn Romeyn[e]s, al-be thei wer ferre,  
 Proudli with them for to gynne a werre.

876 After Ptolemy  
 Philopator  
 came  
 Britomaris,  
 who rode from  
 France into  
 Greece and  
 made war on  
 880 Rome.

But thei of Rome to ther confusioun,  
 Bi ther bisshoppis & preestis gan deuise  
 To vse a cursid fals supersticioun:  
 Vnto ther goddis in ful cruel wise  
 To offre up men banewe sacrefise,

884 The Romans  
 had a cursed  
 custom of  
 burying people  
 alive as an  
 offering to their  
 gods,

856. the] om. R.

859. drynken B. 868. Enbracyng in þe Armyes H.

869. Agathodia J, Agathoclea P. 874. alle] both H.

878. Britomarus P.

885. fals cursid H, R 3. 887. banewe] bi newe R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 109 verso.

- And\* burie hem quyk, in Bochas thus I reede, 888  
 Bi a fals hope thei better for to speede.
- and now they took ten of the French and Greeks, five men and five women, and sacrificed them; but their gods were angry.
- Of Fraunse & Grece thei took[e] ten in noumbre,  
 Halff men & women, togidre tweyne & tweyne;  
 And bi fals moordre thei dede hem encoumbre, 892  
 Buried hem quik — ther deth was ful sodeyne.  
 At this sacrefise the goddis gan disdeyne,  
 And to the Romeyns wex contrarious  
 For ther fals rihtis supersticious. 896
- In this year, 521 after the foundation, Rome was governed by three consuls,
- And bi record of olde cronicleres,  
 The yeer fyue hundred fro ther fundacioun  
 And on & twenti, tho beyng consuleris  
 Thre in noumbre, as maad is menciou[n], 900  
 Which gouernyd & reuled al the toun.  
 The firste callid Lucius Emylius,  
 And the secounde Catulus Gaius,
- who were assigned by the Senate to defend the city.
- Attilius Regulus the thridde consuleer. 904  
 Bi al the senat ordeyned wer thes thre,  
 As I haue told, the silue same yeer  
 For to gouerne & reule ther cite,  
 And to preserue hem from al aduersite 908  
 Ageyn too peeplis, of Gaule & Lumbardie,  
 Which than werreied of malis & envie.
- But there were so many Lombards and other fell foreigners,
- Of which[e] werrz the Romeyns stood in doute,  
 The senatours & alle the citeseyns, 912  
 Because ageyn them ther cam so gret a route  
 Of Lumbardis bi this halff the mounteyns,  
 Ioyned togidre with many fell foreyns,  
 Which stood departid, as maad is remembraunce, 916  
 Fro them of Rome & fro ther obeissaunce.
- barbarous and savage, and unreasonable in their fury,
- The peple rud[e], bestial & vnstable,  
 Togidre assemblid, wood & furious,  
 Of multitude verray innumerable, 920  
 Vengable of herte, of corage despitous,  
 Void of al resoun, sodenli furious,  
 As seith Bochas, I can no ferther gon; —  
 Ther soudiours bar gisarmys euericfion. 924

888. And] To B, R, J, P — thus] as H, R 3.

889. thei] the R 3, H 5, P. 894. At] And R.

896. ther] the R.

903. Catalus Caius P. 907. reule] om. R. 908. fro H.

912. and the] their H.



- And Gisarmes of Gisarme\* thei wer callid, [p. 270] that the Romans stood in great dread.  
 Toward Rome them hastyng day be day,  
 Of gret labour the footmen sore appallid;  
 But al\* ther trust on multitude lay. 928  
 Of whos komyng Roome stood in affray,  
 And specialli the consuleris thre,  
 That out wer sent to fihte for the cite.
- Foure score thousand, as writ the cronycleer, 932 Although each consul had an army of four score thousand men, they were outnumbered by their enemies.  
 Mihti [men] to stonden at diffence,  
 In his felasheepe hadde ech consuleer.  
 And of the Gysarme3 noumbred in sentence,  
 Thre hundred thousand, bi sturdi violence 936  
 Goyng on foote, I fynde that thei hadde,  
 Eihthe thousand ouer, that al the feeldis spradde.
- I rekne nat them that rood on hors[e]bak, who covered the earth with their shadow, and were led by Britomaris and Viridomarus. 940  
 Which sexe & thretti thousand wer in noumbre,  
 Sixe hundred ouer, purposed for the wrak,  
 Fynalli the Romeyns to encoumbre.  
 The shadwe of them gaff so gret an ouble,  
 That on the soil, which afforn was greene, 944  
 Ther was vnnethe any sonne seene.\*
- Ther capteyn was Abithomarus,  
 A manli man & a ful worthi kniht.  
 And with hem wente Virydomarus, 948  
 A-nother capteyn, in steel armyd briht.  
 Tween them and Romeyns longe laste the fiht;  
 But on the parti of Rome the cite  
 Was slayn a consul that was oon of the thre. 952
- Aftir whos deth, of fortune anon riht,  
 On the parti of them of Rome touz  
 Eihthe\* hundred thousand took hem to the fliht.  
 And thus began the fame & the renoun 956 In the battle one consul was slain, and 800,000 of the Romans fled.  
 Of Abithomarus, as maad is mencioun,  
 Of which victorie his herte was maad fayn.  
 And on his parti wer thre thousand slayn.

925. Gisarme] Gisarmes B, R, J, P.

928. al] ay B, R, J, P.

933. men] *om.* MSS., P. 934. consuleer] a Consuler H.935. the] *om.* H, R 3 — number P. 941. hundreth R.944. which] *bat* H. 945. seene] sheene B, R, J, shene P.947. worthi] manly H. 952. the] *om.* R.

955. Eihthe] viij B, One P. 957. Britomarus P.

- Then the  
Romans rallied  
and slew  
40,000  
Gisarmes.
- But the Romeyns resorted been ageyn;  
And aftir that hadde a strong bataille.  
And in the feeld so manli thei wer seyn,  
And so proudli ther enmyes dide assaille,  
That, as myn auctour mak[e]th rehersaille,  
Of the Gisarmes, longe or it was niht,  
Fourti thousand wer slayn in that fiht. 960
- They fought  
once more  
beside the  
Po;
- The thridde tyme, with helpe of them of France  
Ioyned to Lombardes & folk of Gaule also,  
Thei fauht ageyn, al out off ordenaunce,  
Beside the ryuer that callid is the Poo,  
Wher bothe batailles togidre hadde adoo.  
And, as I fynde, consuleris tweyne 968  
The Romeyn sheltrouns knihtli did ordeyne.
- and the  
Romans, led  
by Manlius  
Torquatus and  
Flaminius  
Flaccus, slew  
49,000 of their  
enemies.
- Manlius Torquat callid was the ton;  
Flamynus Flakkus was *with hym* ifeere:  
And with the Romeyns togidre forth\* thei gon 976  
Toward that ryuer with a ful manli cheere;  
In which bataille, the stori doth vs lere,  
Nyne and fourti thousand slayn on that day  
Of ther enmyes, that non ne wente away. 980
- Britomaris was  
made prisoner  
and led to the  
Capitol in  
chains.
- Abithomarus was take prisoner,  
In tokne of tryumphe brouht to Rome toun,  
To the Capitoile, with a ful pale cheer,  
Lad bounde in cheynis, ther geyned no raunsoun: 984  
Thus hath Fortune appallid his hih renoun.  
And in tokne of his disconfiture,  
Offrid to goddis was his cote armure.
- Atropos broke  
the threed of  
his life.  
Viridomarus was  
slain in the  
field.
- Thus Lachesis his lyues threed gan drawe 988  
Til Antropos it brak with ful gret peyne.  
Viridomarus, that was his fellawe,  
Slayn in the feeld bi Romeyns in certeyne.  
And of thes [noble] worthi princis tweyne, 992  
This was the eende & the mortal fall,  
The feeste accomplished callid funeral.

973. The] To R. 974. the] bat H.

975. Flamynus] Flamyn R, J.

976. togidre forth] forth togidre B, J, P — forth] forsooth R.

977. that] be H — ful] om. H. 978. In] I H.

981. Britomarus P — taken H.

988. His lives threde thus Lachesis H, R 3, H 5.

989. ful] om. H. 992. noble] om. MSS., P.

And in the tyme of thes mortal werris  
 Atween thes dukes & them of Rome toun,  
 Many toknis wer shewed in the steris,  
 Merueilous lihtnyngis fro the heuene doun,  
 And many an vnkouth constellacioun;  
 Sondri cometes dide in the walkyn appeere, —  
 Who seeth ther stories may the trouthe lere.

996 At the time of these mortal wars many strange tokens were shewn in the stars, marvelous lightnings, comets and uncouth constellations.  
 1000

The water of Pitene, that renneth in Itaille,  
 Which in that contre is a famous flood,  
 The same hour & tyme of ther bataille,  
 As seith the stori, was turnid into blood.  
 Fires in the hair, most furious & wood,  
 That mihti tours wer with the flawmes brent;  
 Three moonys appeeryng in the orient.

1004 The waters of a river were turned into blood; fires burnt high in the air; and three moons were seen in the east.  
 1008

The peple for feer fledde into lowe kauis, [p. 271]  
 For dreed wex pale & dedli of ther cheer;  
 And in thre daies wer thre erthe-quauis.  
 Duryng thes werris and in the same yeer,  
 Of gret Appollo fill doun the pilleer  
 Of marbil whit, large and of gret strengthe,  
 That sexti cubitis acountid was the lengthe.

The people fled for fear into caves; for in three days there were three earthquakes, and the marble pillar of great Apollo fell down.  
 1012

And in that tyme, the stori seith nat nay,  
 Of Rome a consul with a gret puissaunce,  
 Callid Claudius, slouh upon a day  
 Thretti thousand, & brouht hem to myschaunce,  
 Of the soudiours that cam out of Fraunce.  
 And ther was slayn, with many a capteyn lorn,  
 Viridomarus, of whom I spak tofor.

1016 Claudius, a consul, slew 30,000 Gauls in battle;  
 1020

To his gret shame and confusioun,  
 As it is remembred be scripture,  
 The Romeyns made a gret oblacioun  
 Vp to Iubiter of his cote armure.  
 And in tokne of his disconfiture,  
 Withynne that temple, of gold betyn cleer,  
 To his despiht thei heng up his baneeer.

1024 and to the shame and confusion of the dead Viridomarus, his coat armour and golden banner were offered as an oblation to Jove.  
 1028

998. lihtenyng frome H.  
 1000. walkyn] wakyn R.  
 1001. ther] thes R — may] he may H, R 3.  
 1020. the] ther H — cam] om. R.  
 1021. was] om. R — with] & H.

[How Siphax of Munedie kyng was take & deied in prisoun.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas next speaks briefly of the war between Hannibal and worthy Scipio,

**H**EEER Bochas breeffi for a remembrance  
Writeth of werris, debatis & batailes  
That wer þat tyme in Itaille & France, 1032  
In Spaigne, Chaumpayne, with marcial apparailles.  
And among othir in his rehersailles,  
He tellith in Affrik the gret[e] discencioun  
Atween Hanybal & worthi Scipioun. 1036

and then turns to Syphax, king of Numidia,

He touchith ther namys & abit nat longe;  
Vpon ther stories he bit nat but a while,  
Heer nat rehersyng ther myhti werris stronge,  
Nor of ther stryues he doth heer nat compile, 1040  
But doun descenyng, directeth foorth his stile  
For to rehearse & telle be writyng  
The fall of Siphax in Munedie kyng.

who defeated two kings in two battles. One of the kings, Masinissa, was obliged to flee from his country and consort with robbers and wild beasts and live on roots and fruit.

This said[e] Siphax batailles hadde tweyne, 1044  
Oon with kyng Gabba, [&] he of verray myght  
Hadde eek another, in which he dede his peyne  
To meete Masmysa afftir anon riht.  
And bothe kynges he putte to the fliht. 1048  
And of Messulie, I fynde be writyng,  
How Masmysa was gouernour & kyng.

This said[e] Siphax thoruh his cheualrie  
Maad Masmysa to fleen his regioun, 1052  
Constreynyng hym to lyue be robberie,  
To walke in forestis with beestis up & doun.  
And for diffaute, as maad is menciouñ,  
To saue his liff he fond no bet reffut, 1056  
But fedde hysilff on rootes & on frut.

Even his name was forgotten in his own land.

Out of his reum Masmysa was enchaced,  
And constreyned to fleen from his contre;  
Fro mynde of folk his name was out raced, 1060  
For no man wiste wher he sholde be.  
His liegemen & folk of his cite,  
Thoruh al Affrik knew no bettir reed  
Off his persone, but dempte that he was ded. 1064

1031. of] *om.* J — bataill H.

1032. &] & in H, R 3. 1033. apparaile H, R 3, H 5.

1034. rehersaille H, rehersail R 3. 1038. nat] *om.* R.

1040. heer nat] nat her H. 1043. Numedy P.

1045. Gabba] Galba H, R 3, Gala P, Gabla H 5 — &] *om.* R, J.

1047. Masinissa P. 1049. Massile P. 1053. be] in R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 110 recto.

- Thus of kyng Siphax encrece gan the glorie,  
Which bi force too kynges hath outraied,  
And upon them wonnen the victorie,  
Put hem to fliht & the people affraied;  
That Rome & Cartage wer of hym dismaied.  
And ech of them dede ther labour  
Of ther werris to make hym *gouernour*.
- Vnto [this] Siphax, out of Rome *town*,  
As it is write for a memoriall,  
To Numedie was sent Scipioun  
For this mateer in especiall.  
Out of Cartage was sent Hastruball;  
And at the castell wher Siphax lay,  
Bothe tweyne arryued at o day.
- And be pleyn wrytyng as I haue conceyued,  
And as the stori remembreth in sentence,  
At ther comyng bothe wer resecyued  
Of kyng Siphax with gret[e] reuerence.  
And thoruh his notable manli dilligence,  
As it is Iwrytyn be record,\*  
He made thes capteyns hertili of accord,  
That thei togidre lay the same niht,  
Thei hadde of Siphax so gret surete,  
Be promys maad, as he was trewe kniht,  
That nouter of them sholde deceyued be.  
But ther was founde ful gret duplicite  
Folwyng afftir, who-so can take heede,  
Lik as this storie shal deuise in deede.
- For bi the fraude & falsnesse most mortall [p. 272]  
Compassed befor[e]n, it is thus befall,  
That bi the sleihte of this Hastruball, —  
As Affrican[e]s be nih double alle,  
Vnder sugre can hide weel ther galle, —  
So Hastruball bi fals decepcioun  
Vnder fair cheer deceyued Scipioun.
- He brouht in Siphax bi fals sotilte,  
And bi his sleihti peynted fair langage,  
That he sholde with hym allied bee,  
Be ful assent to hauen in mariage

Thus the glory  
of Syphax  
increased; and  
both Rome and  
Carthage  
sought to make  
him their  
general.

From Rome  
Scipio was sent  
to him, from  
Carthage  
Hadrubal.

Both were  
received with  
great respect;

both were given  
the same  
promise.

But by the  
duplicity of  
Hadrubal,

Syphax was  
promised  
Sophonisba in  
marriage, and  
thereby induced  
to side with  
Carthage.

1066. hath] had R. 1072. this] *om.* R, J, P

1084. record] good record B, R, J, P.

1096. double nyh H, doubill nyh R 3.

1100. fals] his H, R 3, hys H 5.

- Sophonisba, a maiden of Cartage, 1104  
 Which was douhtir, yong & fa[i]r withal,  
 As seith Bochas, to this Hastrubal.
- Scipio was deceived. The which[e] thyng be crafft was brouht aboute 1108  
 And acomplisshe[d] verraily in deede.  
 And bi this mene, pleynli out of doute,  
 Ther first began rancour & hatreede,  
 Symulacioun, feynyng & falsheede,  
 That atween Siphax & Hastrubal, alas, 1112  
 Scipioun was deceyued in this caas.
- After his marriage, Syphax and Hastrubal made war on the Romans; And aftir that doon was this mariage,  
 Siphax ful enmy vnto\* Sipioun,  
 With Hastrubal rood into Cartage 1116  
 And gan werreie ageyn[e]s Roome toun.  
 And in this while, as maad is mencion,  
 Kyng Masmysa out of wildirnesse  
 Toward Scipioun in al haste gan hym dresse. 1120
- and Masinissa, joining forces with Scipio, With his peple gan to make hym strong  
 Thoruh help of Scipioun & of Bellius,  
 Wente ageyn Siphax, & abood nat long,  
 His herte ageyn hym was so envious. 1124  
 And on a day, the stori tellith thus,  
 With Affricanys & folkis of Cartage,  
 Siphax the Romeyns mette in the visage.
- helped him take vengeance on Syphax, who was captured Of Masmysa the peple wer so wood 1128  
 Vpon Siphax auengid for to bee,  
 Thoruh ther batailles cam to hym ther he stood,  
 And maugre hym and [al] his cruelte,  
 Of verray manhod — space was non to flee — 1132  
 Thei brouhte hym hom thoruh ther hih renoun  
 Into the handis of worthi Scipioun.
- and led prisoner to Rome. Siphax was take thus or he was war,  
 Vndir his baner, maugre al his myht, 1136  
 And into Rome lad afforn the chaar  
 Off Scipioun, the noble worthi kniht,  
 That wan the tryumphe, grauntid hym of riht.  
 And Sophonisba, afforn to Siphax wiff, 1140  
 Weddid to Masmysse at theende of al this striff.
1114. And] Anoon H, Anon R 3. 1115. vnto] to this B, R, J.  
 1116. into] in R.  
 1122. 2nd of] om. H. 1127. mett þe Romayns H.  
 1128. wer] was R, H. 1130. bataile H.  
 1131. al] om. R, J. 1141. Masmysa H.

Loo, how Fortune chaunge can hir tides!  
 To oon this day she can be fauourable,  
 Make capteyns & thes grete guides,  
 Which wende ha founde hir wheel ferme & stable. 1144  
 But that she is ay froward & chaungable,  
 Freendli to-day, to-morwe at discord, —  
 Yiff this be trewe, Siphax can ber record. 1148

Sophoniba then  
 married  
 Masinissa.  
 Lo, how  
 Fortune can  
 change, —  
 friendly to-day,  
 to-morrow at  
 discord, as  
 Syphax can  
 testify,

This Siphax was sent out of the toun  
 In cheynys bounde withoute mor tarieng,  
 And at Tiburny lay fetrid in prisoun,  
 Deied at myscheeff, made ther his eendyng. 1152  
 And for because that he was a kyng,  
 The Romeyns made, of marcial pite,  
 Hym to be buried withynne ther cite.

for he died a  
 prisoner and  
 was buried in  
 Rome.

[How Nabyn hauyng no title but bi tiramyng took  
 on him to be kyng of Macedoyne was slayne.]<sup>1</sup>

**N**EXT cam Nabyn, ful pitousli weepyng,  
 Tofor Iohn Bochas, which be tirannye 1156  
 Off Macedoyne took on hym to be kyng,  
 Hauyng no title sauff title of robberie,  
 Onli bi force hymself to magnefie;  
 Which with strong hand took fals\* pociessoun 1160  
 For to be crownyd in thilke regioun.

Next appeared  
 Nabis, who,  
 without title,  
 took upon  
 him to be king  
 of Macedonia,

This Macedoyne, as be old writyngis,  
 Whilom was had in ful gret reuerence,  
 Because onli it floured in too thynges, 1164  
 Bothe in knihthod & souereyn sapience;  
 Mars ther bi manhod, Pallas be prudence:  
 And whil thes tweyne hadde gouernaunce, 1168  
 Of al weelfare thei hadde suffisaunce.

a country that  
 flowered in both  
 knighthood and  
 wisdom.

And whil the noblesse of thes thynges tweyne,  
 That is to seyne, the flour of hih clergie,  
 The hih renoun most famous & souereyne 1172  
 Of marcial prowesse & of cheualrie,  
 Gouerned that lond bi prudent\* policie,  
 Than stood that kyngdam, auctours reherse konne,  
 Among the Greekis lik an heuenli sonne. 1176

So long as  
 these two  
 things lasted,  
 that kingdom  
 was as a sun  
 to Greece.

1144. thes] othir H. 1145. ferme] firme R — ferme &] om. J, P.

1156. Nabis P. 1158. to] om. R. 1146. that] om. R.

1161. fals] ful B, R, J. 1163. Lacedemoine P.

1167. Pallas] Pallas ther H.

1174. prudent] newe B, J, P, new R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf III recto.

But finally its  
light was  
darkened, when  
covetousness  
and tyranny  
entered,

But at the laste eclipsed was the liht  
Bothe of knihthod and philosophie,  
Whan couetise gan entren ageyn riht  
For to vsurpe upon the regalie,  
By\* intrusioun of fals[e] tiran<sup>n</sup>ye,  
And bextort force made ther entrynges,  
Hauyng no title ther to\* regne as kynges.

[p. 273]

1180

chief cause why  
the noblesse of  
Grece was  
brought low.

This was cheef cause, for short conclusioun,  
That the noblesse of Grece was brouht[e] bas,  
And Macedoyne brouht to confusioun  
Be couetise, that set hem in such caas,  
Wherby\* ther knihthod fulli translatid was  
And ther policie, in cronicle ye may see,  
Out of Grece to Rome the cite.

1184

1188

One of their  
tyrants was  
Nabis, hated by  
Rome

And among other, bi cleer remembra[u]nce,  
Of such tirauntis bi ordre rehersyng,  
Nabyn was oon, that hadde gouernaunce  
In Macedoyne, & was ther crownyd kyng,  
Withoute title falsli ther regnyng.  
And for his froward contagious cruelte  
He was behatid of Rome the cite.

1192

1196

as well as by  
his own subjects.  
He was first  
attacked  
by Titus  
Flaminus,

The Romeyns sente a myhti consuleer,  
Titus Flaminus, of ther werris guide;  
To Macedoyne he gan approche neer,  
Toward Argos wher Nabyn dede abide,  
Of entent[e] for tabate his pride.  
But whil Nabyn stood hiest in estat,  
Of Grece his lieges wer with hym at debat.

1200

1204

and in the  
end overthrowen  
by Philopemen  
and slain by  
Alexamenus.

A duk Icallid P[h]ilopomones,  
With the people that duellid in Grece-lond,  
To stryue with Nabyn put hymself in pres,  
Disconfited hym, fihthyng hond of hond;  
And at gret myscheeff, ye shal vndirstond,  
Alexamenes, a kniht of that contre,  
Slouh this Nabyn, the cronicle ye may see.

1208

1177. 2nd the] ther H.

1181. By] But B, R, J.

1182. force] wrong H, R 3.

1183. to] for to B, R 3.

1184. cheef] om. H.

1188. Whereby] Therbi B, R, J.

1205. A] And R.

1209. at] a H 1211. cronicle] story H.



[Here Bochas reherceth the mortal werrys betwix  
Romayns & Affricanys.]<sup>1</sup>

- ¶ Afftir this Nabyñ, Bochas doth procede 1212 Bochas now  
To telle the werris & the mortal stryues proceeds to tell  
Tween Romeyns & Affricanys in deede, about the wars  
Wherbi ful many loste ther her lyues. between Rome  
Caused wydwes, maydnes & eek wyues 1216 and Carthage.
- To weepe and waile, in such disioynt thei stood,  
On outhr parti to seen the losse of blood.
- For the parti of them off Roome touñ  
Wer maad capteyns & dyuers officeres, 1220 Among the  
Which into Affrik with peepel wer sent douñ. were Marcus  
And specialli ther wer too consuleeris, Manlius, Lucius  
Notable in armys and famous in tho yeeris: Censorinus and  
Marcus Manlius, born of the Romeyn lynē; 1224 Scipio.
- The tothir callid Lucyus Consoryne.
- With them was sent a tribun ful notable,  
Of whom tofforn I made mencioun,  
For the werris most worthi & most hable, 1228  
I meene of Rome prudent Scipioun,  
Which of ther cite was cheuest champioun,  
Of hool entent thaffricanys tanoye,  
And specialli Cartage to destroye. 1232
- And nih be Cartage ther was a cite strong,  
Mihntili bilt, & stood upon the se,  
The wallis thikke, round[e], squar & long,  
Cheeff diffense callid of that contre, 1236 Near by  
To saue & keepe hem from al aduersite. Carthage  
And fourti cubitis, with crestis marcial, was a strong  
Lik as I fynde, of heihte was the wal. city upon the  
sea, the chief  
defence of  
that country.
- And in the frount, reised for the werre, 1240 In it was a  
Of stonis squar[e] was an hih dongoun high keep  
Callid Birsa; fro which wonder ferre called Byrsa.  
Men myhte beholde the contres enviroun. The Africans  
And, as I reede, for ther sauacioun chose two  
Thaffricanys of purpos did ordeyne Hasdrubals to  
1244 be their  
captains.
- For ther capteyns Hastrubalis tweyne.

1215. Wherbi] Therbi R.

1217. thei] the R. 1225. Censoryne P.

1231. the Affricans P.

1242. from R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 111 recto.

- Scipio laid  
siege to Byrra  
and broke down  
part of the wall,
- The said[e] dongoun, myhtili batailed,  
Ageyn al sautis to stonden & endure: 1248  
But worthi Scipioun, for al that, hath nat failed  
For taproche & doon bi besi cure,  
With his engynes myhti, strong & seure;  
So that be force, this kniht most marciall, 1252  
A gret quantite brak doun of the wall.
- while Lucius and  
Marcus went  
forth to give  
battle to  
one of the  
Hasdrubals,
- And Lucyus, callid Sensoryne,  
Departid is with Marcus Manlius,  
And bi the counsail of Scipioun & doctryne, 1256  
Bothe of assent, in armis vertuous,  
Thei took ther way, myn auctour tellith thus,  
With Hastrubal, sothli & thei myhte,  
Wher as he lay that same day to fihte. 1260
- whom they  
defeated and  
slew together  
with 40,000  
Carthaginians  
in Cirrha.
- Thes consuleris assailed the cite [p. 274]  
Callid Cirie, & beet adoun the wall,  
Slouh fourti thousand, the cronicle ye may see,  
Of Affricannys be vengauñce ful mortall. 1264  
And ther constable callid Hastruball  
Was slayn that day bi them\*, it is no doute,  
That he most trustid & next wer hym aboute.
- In the mean-  
while Scipio  
entered Carthage  
and took all  
the inhabitants  
prisoner,
- And in this while, most manli of corage, 1268  
The worthi tribun, Publius Scipioun,  
Bi verray force is entrid in Cartage;  
And sixe daies, as maad is menciouñ,  
He and his knihtis constreynd so the toun, 1272  
That disespeired, with ther dedli cheeris,  
Thei of the toun yald[e] hem prisoneris,
- who begged that  
they might be  
allowed to live  
in seruage and  
pay the Romans  
a tribute.
- Meekli requeryng vnto Scipioun,  
To resceyue hem in this mortal rage; 1276  
That men & wommen duellyng in that toun  
With the citeseyns, yong & old of age,  
Mihte abide & lyuen in seruage  
Vnder the Romeyns, ther was no bet reffut, 1280  
And yeer bi yeer paie hem a tribut.

1248. assautis H.

1251. engynes] Inmyes H. 1253. the] ther H.

1254. Censoryne H. 1259. Hasdruball P.

1262. Cyrra P.

1266. them] hym B, R, him J, P.

1273. dispeired R.

1278. the] om. H.

And of Affrik the tothir Hastruball,  
Which among hem afforn was crownid kyng,  
Lefft his estat and his poweer roiall,  
Yald hym prisoneer, humbeli knelyng.  
And his wiff most pitousli weepyng,  
Whan that she sauh hir lord was take so,  
Ran inta\* fire & brent hirsilff for wo.

1284 The other  
Hasdrubal gave  
himself up to  
the Romans;  
and his wife  
ran into a fire  
for sorrow and  
burnt herself  
up.

1288

Sixe and twenti thousand, as I fynde,  
Wer lad of wommen into captyuyte;  
Thretti thousand of men cam behynde,  
Take prisoneres in gret aduersite.  
And seunteene daies brente that cite,  
That in ther wallis was non so harde ston,  
But into pouder it was brent anon.

26,000 women  
and 30,000 men  
were captured,  
and the city  
destroyed.

1292

And this was doon, breefli to conclude,  
Bi the prowess of Publius Scipioun.  
Sold in seruage was a gret multitude;  
Ther old[e] lordis lad fetrid to prisoun.  
This was of Cartage fynal destruccioun, —  
To write ther compleyntis Bochas abit no while,  
But into Grece turneth ageyn his stile,

1296 It was by the  
prowess of  
Publius Scipio  
that the fall  
of Carthage  
was accom-  
plished.

1300

[How kyng Perseus bi Romayns was outraid &  
after taken.]<sup>1</sup>

**I**N Lacedemoyne remembryng o[f] a kyng  
Callid Perseus, a ful proud werreior,  
Cleymyng a title, upon hym vsurpyng  
For to succede as trewe enheritour  
To grete Alisandre, most myhti conquerour,  
Fulli affermyng, ageyn a certeyn day  
He wil be crowned maugre who seith nay.

1304 There was once  
a king of  
Sparta named  
Perseus, who  
usurped the  
crown after the  
death of  
Alexander.

1308

And his name to putte in memorie,  
Caste in his persone renewe the prowess  
Of kyng Alisaundre, & tencrece his glorie,  
To folwe his traxis in kniethod & noblesse.  
And first of alle, of hasti wilfulnesse,  
That his conquest myhte sprede ferre,  
Gan of purpos with Romeyns to haue werre.\*

1312 He first made  
war on Rome,  
for he was  
ambitious to  
follow in  
Alexander's  
footsteps;

1316

1288. inta] in to the R, into B, P, in to J, into a R 3, in taffryk  
H 5.

1289. twenti] thritty H. 1301. compleynt H.

1304. Parseus R. 1305. title] tithe H. 1309. seith] say H.

1316. werre] a werre B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 111 verso.

- but when he realized the power of the Romans he grew afraid and sent envoys to make peace. But aftir this he was bet auised,  
Whan he parceyued the marcial apparaille  
Of the Romeyns, wheroff he was agrised,  
Wex afferd ther noblesse to assaille, 1320  
Which ay wer founde victorious in bataille.  
And wher he had afforn\* be rek[e]les,  
Sent enbassatours with them to trete of pes.
- The Romans saw how presumptuous he was, and sent Sulpicius, who treated his embassy with contempt. Thei hadde apparceyued his presumpcioun, 1324  
And how he was proud and surquedous.  
Sent a consul with a gret powerer doun,  
The name of whom was Sulpicius,  
Which dedli hatid the said[e] Perseus, 1328  
Thoruh hertli rancour ageyn hym wex soleyrn,  
Of his ambassiat hauyng but disdeyn.
- Paulus Emilius was also sent against him by Rome; and the night after his arrival the moon eclipsed, And ther parti for to fortiefe  
With the said consul Sulpicius, 1332  
Thei sent another, expert in cheualrie,  
A consul also, Paulus Emylius,  
Among Romeyns notable & famous.  
And folwyng aftir, the silue same niht, 1336  
The moone eclipsed fulli of his liht.
- a token that Perseus should be vanquished. A cleer tokne, as maad is mencionn,  
That kyng Perseus should haue a sharp[e] shour,  
And that his lordshepe & his regeoun 1340  
Sholde been oppressid, void of al socour,  
And that Macedonoys shold haue no faouur  
Ageyn the Romeyns togidre whan thei mette  
With round[e] speris & suerdis sharpe whette. 1344
- Perseus was put to flight by a young knight called Cato; The day of bataille, to his ences of glorie, [p. 275]  
For the parti of them off Rome toum,  
Ther was a kniht that caused the victorie,  
Yong, fressh and lusti, & callid was Catoun, 1348  
Which brouht ther enmyes to confusioun;  
For Macedonoys thoruh his gret[e] myht  
Outraied wern, & Perseus put to fliht.
- and afterwards he and his two sons were made prisoners by a captain called Octavius. But Emylius, the noble consuleer, 1352  
Sente a capteyn callid Octauyus  
To pursue aftir in coostis ferr & neer  
The proude kyng, this said[e] Perseus.

1322. he had afforn] afforn he hadde B, R, J, afore he had P.

1330. enbassat R, H, R 3, Ambassat J, embassade P.

1342. faouur] socour R.

1353. callid is repeated in H.

And he was take, for ther was no rescus, 1356  
 With his sonis, that wer in noumbre tweyne,  
 Phelipp, Alisaundre, the stori is certeyne.

**M**YN auctour heer tellith of kynges manye,  
 Thretti in noumbre: the firste Geramus, 1360  
 Which haue regned witbyne Macedonye;\*  
 And laste of alle was this Perseus.

My author says  
 that thirty kings  
 reigned in  
 Macedonia, and  
 that Perseus was  
 the last of them.

The noumbre of yeeris, Bochas writeth thus,  
 Was nyne hundrid, as is remembred heer, 1364  
 Space of ther regnyng, with foure & tuenti yeer.

Aftir translaticid was the regeoun,  
 With al ther iles, vnto thobeissaunce  
 Of them of Rome, withoute excepcioun; 1368  
 The\* grete lordis that wer of most puissaunce  
 Abood[e] ther long vndir gouernaunce,  
 And Perseus, disconsolat of cheer,  
 Duryng his lyff abood ther prisoneer. 1372

They reigned  
 924 years, and  
 afterwards their  
 country was  
 translated to  
 Rome.

[How the peple of Achaia, with ther cheef Cite  
 Corynthe by Romayns was destroyed.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HUS the lordshepe wered out & spent  
 Of Macedoyne, as maad is mencionn.  
 Ther wer too contres therto adiacent,  
 The ton Achaia, a litil regeoun,  
 And Spartanoy\*s goyng envirooun, 1376  
 Mihti of peple and of gret substauce,  
 In oon confederat & of oon alliaunce.

There were two  
 countries near  
 Macedonia,  
 Achaia and  
 Sparta, which  
 were bound  
 together in an  
 alliance.

Thei wer conioyned & bothe maad al oon 1380  
 Bi a maner feithful convencionn.  
 And when the Romeyns knew hem for ther foon,  
 Hauyng ther frenshipe in suspecioun,  
 Thei caste to make a disiunccioun 1384  
 Atween thes londis, in breede & eek in lengthe;  
 For thyng disseuered is menused of his strengthe.

As they were  
 enemies of  
 Rome, the  
 Romans sought  
 to sow dis-  
 sension between  
 them;

Ordeyned cites and toun[e]s heer & yonder,  
 Wheron the Romeyns gan make a decre, 1388  
 That ther lordshepes sholde be sette assonder,

but the peple  
 threatened to  
 rise against the  
 Roman  
 messengers,

1359. tellith heer R, J, telleth here P. 1361. Macedoyne B.  
 1369. The] To B, J, P.  
 1377. Spartanoy\*s] Spathanoy\*s B, Spatanoy\*s R, H, R 3, Spa-  
 tanois J.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 112 recto.

- Which made the peeple in eueri gret cite,  
Whan thei knew ther fals subtilite,  
To rise attonys, most cruel of ther cheeris, 1392  
And wolde ha slayn the Romeyn massageris.
- and finally the  
Romans, losing  
patience, sent  
down a consul  
called Mummius  
against Achaea.  
And fynalli bi this occasiou $\pi$   
Romeyns ageyn hem gan wexen furious,  
Took hardynesse off ther dyuisiou $\pi$ ; 1396  
And a consul callid Munius,  
A manli kniht, in armis ful famous,  
Into Achaia was fro Roome sent  
It to destroye bi gret auisement. 1400
- The Achaeans  
in their pride  
entered the  
field without  
preparation,  
and set their  
wives and  
women on a  
high mountaine  
to see the battle.  
Thei of Achaia bi ther necligence,  
And bi ther froward wilful reklesnesse,  
Of verray pride list make no diffence;  
Thouhte themsilff, withoute auisynesse, 1404  
Off poweer able, & strenger in sothnesse  
Than wer[e] Romeyns, veraili in deede:  
Thus wer thei stroied afforn or thei took heede.
- Thei stood in hope in ther sturdynesse 1408  
Bi that bataille to haue had gret pillage,  
Of the Romeyns to ha[ue] won[n]e gret richesse.  
And for a pompe, of wilful fals dotage  
Thei took ther wyues and wommen yong off age, 1412  
And set hem up on an hih mounteyn,  
That ther manhod myhte in the feeld be seyn.
- But the Romans  
slew their  
troops like  
cattle and  
carried off the  
women and  
children to  
Rome.  
Whan the Romeyns mette hem in bataille,  
Thei dispurueid and out off ordenaunce, 1416  
Slayn lik beestis, ther poweer gan to faille,  
Of froward pride & rekles gouernaunce,  
That Achaia was brouht to myschaunce;  
Wommen and childre, for sorwe almost mad, 1420  
To lyue in seruage wer to Rome lad.
- Corinth was  
destroyed, chief  
market of its  
time;  
Corynthe that tyme was ther cheef cite,  
Destroied be Romeyns & brouht vnto ruyne,  
Which among citees, in Bochas ye may see, 1424  
Aboue alle othir dide in honou $\pi$  shyne;  
Of alle sciences ther floured the doctrine,  
And of craftis artificeres most wise,  
Rekne al the world, ther was cheef marchaundise. 1428

1393. messangeers H. 1397. Mummius P. 1399. from R.

- Thus vnwarli in ther most noblesse, [p. 276] and Bochas says  
 Sittyng of Fortune on the [hihest] stage, that the flames  
 Thei wer destroyed of tresor & richesse, rose high in  
 Brouhte to nouht bi slauhtre & pillage, the sky.  
 Ther wallis broke in that cruel rage. 1432
- And in that brennyng, Bochas seith, the leuene  
 Rauht a gret part upward to the heuene.
- Pleyn with the erthe the wallis broke down, 1436  
 The peple slayn merciles, yong & old; The walls were  
 And ther was maad a gret dyuisioun: people levelled and the  
 Summe lad in seruage, & somme of them wer sold. mercilessly stain  
 Images of coper, of syluer & of gold or sold into  
 Wer sodenli, in al that violence, 1440 bondage.
- Togidre molte, so hoot was the feruence.
- Of which metal thus afftir it is fall, 1444  
 Gold, siluer, coper, medlid into oon, The statues of  
 Coper of Corynthe men sothli dede it<sup>m</sup> call, the images of  
 Thoruh al the world of custum euerichon. gold and silver  
 Fame of which metal is so ferr Igon, melted and  
 That the vessellis forgid of the same afterwards  
 1448 of Copper  
 of Corinth.
- ¶ Afftir Corynthe was thus brent to nouht, 1452  
 A prynce callid Philipp Philermene After the  
 To Iohn Bochas hath his compleynt brouht, destruction of  
 In whos face and cheer it was weel seene, Corinth,  
 The woful constreynt of his mortal teene. Philip  
 And he was whilom, Bochas doth specefie, Philermene  
 Lord of a cite callid Vallaquye. 1456 made his  
 complaint to  
 Bochas.
- Marcus Actilius took hym prisoneer, 1460  
 Brouht hym to Roome, list hym nat respite. He was brought  
 ¶ Next\* to [Iohn] Bochas, with an heuy cheer, prisoner to  
 Appeerid a duc\* callid Democrite. Rome by  
 Of Etholis, myn auctour doth so write, Marcus Atilius,  
 He was cheeff lord; but he & his contre as was also  
 Translatid wern to Roome the cite. Duke  
 Democritus  
 of Ætolia,
1430. of Fortune on the hihest] hihest of Fortune in the H, P,  
 hihest of Fortune on the R 3, H 5 — on] in J, R — hihest]  
 hi R.
1441. that] ther R. 1444. medlid] Ioyned H, R 3.
1449. callid H, called P — by] the B, R, J.
1459. *The paragraph mark is misplaced before the next line,* B —  
 John] om. R, J, P, H 5, R 3 — an] om. H, R 3, H 5.
1460. duc] kniht B, R, J, P — Domocrite R, J, Damocrite P.
1461. Elholoys H.

who escaped  
once and,  
retaken, went  
mad and slew  
himself.

This duk was cast and cheyned in prisoun, 1464  
Escapid onys, in stori as I fynde,  
Take ageyn, throwe in a derk dongoun,  
Ther for sorwe wente out of his mynde,  
Slouh hymself at myscheeff ageyns kynde — 1468  
Loo, hou thes princis proud & rek[elles  
Haue shamful eende, which cannat lyue in pes!

[How grete Anthiocus vsyng riot and viciuos lyu-  
yng/ bi marchus Actilius was outraied & deied  
soderly.]<sup>1</sup>

The story of  
Seleucus and  
Antiochus,  
of Laodices and  
the ring

**T**OUCHYNG þe stori in ordre heer folwyng  
Of Seleuchus & gret Anthiocus, 1472  
Off his mooder Laodices & þe ryng,  
With other toknes & signes merueilleous,  
And how also the famous\* Seleuchus  
Hadde in his theih, as writen is heer-toforn, 1476  
Preent of an anker the day whan he was born,

and the print of  
the anchor,  
which descended  
to all the  
children, was  
told in the  
Fourth Book.

And al the childre bi successioun  
Hadde be discent, bor[e]n of his lynage,  
Preent of an anker, as maad is mencioniun, 1480  
The fourte book, with al the surplusage  
Of othir toknis ther told in pleyn langage.  
And of the seide same Seleuchus  
Cam be discent the saide Antiochus. 1484

Another  
Antiochus,  
a descendant of  
Seleucus,

Whos herte was set of hih[e] couetise  
To folwe his lustis and delectacioun[s];  
And specialli he caste gan & deuise  
To wynne in Grece dyuers regiouns. 1488  
And of the people he cauhte occasiouns,  
Bi ther fauour to conquere that\* contre  
And to rebelle ageyn Rome the cite.

rebelled against  
the Romans and  
conquered many  
of their towns  
in Greece;

With multitude & gret apparaille 1492  
He gat in Grece castellis & eek touns  
Longyng to Roome, conquered be bataille;  
Took upon hym in his presumpciouns  
Falsli to folwe the inclynaciouns 1496  
Of his berth, whil he dede abide  
In a cite that callid was Calcide.\*

1475. famous] same B. 1480. an] om. R.

1483. same saide H. 1486. delectacioun R.

1490. that] ther B, R. 1498. Talcide B, R, J, Ealcide H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 112 verso.



- For cause of slouthe he lefte his cheualrie,  
 Forsook[e] Mars & took hym to Cupide,  
 Restyng the wyntir, he spente in lecherie,  
 In wach and riot, ches Venus to his guide:  
 Sensualite maad resoun stonde aside;  
 And bi thes menys, for short conclusioun,  
 He was conveied to his destruccioun.
- And whan that wyntir *witb* his frostis colde  
 Ipassid was and al his stormys keene,  
 In riot spent and wastid, as I tolde,  
 And ver cam in *witb* his newe greene,  
 And fressh[e] Flora, which is of flouris queene,  
 Off custum gynneth hir motles out to dresse, —  
 In which[e] sesoun, as auctours alle expresse,
- Kynges, princis, with marcial apparaille, [p. 277]  
 Tyme whan Phebus in the Ram doth shyne,  
 Thei hem dispose to gon out to bataille,  
 For exercise of marcial disciplyne.  
 And doun fro Roome, expert in that doctryne,  
 Descendid is Marchus Actilius  
 Ageyn this vicious proude Anthiochus.
- This noble Mark, preued in armis weel,  
 Which in his tyme was soo good a kniht,  
 With al his hoost[e], armyd in briht steel,  
 Ageyn Antiochus *cam* to the feeld doun riht,  
 Vpon a morwe whan Phebus shon ful briht.  
 Set his wardeyns be capteyns that he ches  
 Vpon an hill callid Termophiles.
- Antiochus upon the tothir side,  
 Whom glotonye & riot dede oppresse,  
 And dronke Bachus, which *witb* hym dide abide,  
 With Morpheus wiff, of slombre cheeff goddessse, —  
 Which caused hym thoruh slouthe & idilnesse  
 That prouidence out of his court was gon,  
 Causyng that day the slauhtre of many on.
- Whan the consul, Marchus, the worthi knyht,  
 His aduersaries proudli gan assaille,  
 Thei vnपुरueid, took hem to the fliht;  
 Disaraied thei myhte nat auaille.  
 Thus Anthiochus fledde out of bataille;

but he soon  
 grew slothful,  
 and, forsaking  
 Mars, betook  
 himself to  
 Cupid, and  
 spent the winter  
 in lechery.

When spring  
 came with  
 Flora and her  
 fresh flowers,

[p. 277] and Phœbus  
 shone in the  
 Ram, Marcus  
 Atilius  
 descended  
 down from  
 Rome with his  
 army,

and the  
 gluttonous,  
 riotous  
 Antiochus was  
 defeated and  
 forced to flee

For ageyn Romeyns he myht nat endure:  
Therefore on hym fill the disconfiture.

1540

to Ephesus.  
He tried to  
make peace, but  
was rebuffed.

Thus rebukid fledde to Ephesie,  
Ferr in Grece, and ther to duelle he ches,  
Sente Romeyns a gret embassatrie  
With said[e] Marchus for to trete of pes.  
But his\* embassiat, this verray dout[e]les,  
Whan thei atteyned of Marchus the presence,  
Wer refusid & hadde non audience.

1544

Greatly  
mortified, he  
then began a  
war against  
Rome on the  
sea

Of which Antiochus gretli was a-shamed,  
Caste ageyn Roome of hate & enmyte  
To reise a poweer, & hath of newe attamyd  
To gadre shippis & make a gret arme,  
Gynne a werre ageyn hem on the se,  
Hauyng an hope, vndir a coward dreede,  
Bet on the watir than on the lond to speede.

1548

1552

and was  
beaten three  
times.

Made his shippis be stuffed with vitaille,  
And his capteyns han the lond forsake;  
But whan the Romeyns gan hym of newe\* assaille,  
His shippis brent & al his stuff was take.  
And lik myn auctour compendiously doth make,  
Thries on the se the Romeyns werreyng,  
He was outraied, the stori witnessyng.

1556

1560

Once more he  
fought the  
Romans on  
land with  
chariots set  
with scythes,

Yit efft ageyn to his confusioun  
Vpon the lond[e] he gan make\* hym strong,  
Mette with Corneli callid Scipioun,  
With waynes, cartes maad for the werre long,  
Shod with hard iren, sharp sithes set among  
In trauers wise bi gret ordenaunce;  
But for al that, he was brouht to myschaunce.

1564

1568

and elephants,  
and again he  
was compelled  
to flee and was  
finally obliged  
to pay a  
tribute to  
Rome.

With olyfauntis & castellis on the[r] bak  
That day was slayn many a worthi kniht,  
Vpon his host so cruel was the wrak,  
That he constreynd took hym to the fliht,  
Forsook the contre, fledde out of mennys siht.  
To the Romeyns, he coude it nat delae,  
Ech yeer constreynd a tribut for to paie.

1572

1544. of] om. R. 1545. his] in this B, R, J, P.  
1548. which] be which H. 1551. the shippis R.  
1554. In reading MS. H., turn back to leaf 105.  
1557. gan hym of newe] of newe gan hym B, R, J, P.  
1563. maken B. 1565. the] their H.  
1569. their] the R, J. 1572. hym to] vn to H.  
1573. the] his H.

But he of fraude, because of his tribut  
 1576 He then began  
 For couetise feyned sore pouerte, to rob mer-  
 chants and  
 Gadred robbours, & be fals pursut temples,  
 Oppressid marchauntis, spoiled the contre,  
 1580 Robbed templis, of hatful cruelte,  
 And fro Iubiter callid Dodonyan\*  
 Took alle the reliques, the story telle can.  
 Dide sacrilege & entrid in that cloos  
 1584 and at last  
 Withoute reuerence or any obseruauce, fell dead whil  
 in the act of  
 For which the temple ageyn[es] hym aroos, despoiling the  
 temple of  
 And, as it is put in remembraunce, Jupiter of  
 Dodona.  
 Bi the goddis ther fill a gret vengauce  
 Vpon this tiraunt, quakyng in his dreed, — 1588  
 Al sodenli he fill to grounde ded.

¶ *Lenvoye.*

**T**HIS tragedie of Anthiochus, [p. 278] This froward  
 Who list in ordre his froward stori see, tragedy of  
 First to al vertu he was contrarious, Antiochus,  
 1592 who was justy  
 And rebel euer to Roome the cite, accused of  
 Iustli accusid of vicious thynges thre: pride, sloth,  
 Of pride, slouthe and of glotonye, gluttony, riot  
 And of disordynat superfluite, and excess,  
 1596  
 Of niht excesse, riot and lecherie.  
 On hym the Romeyns wer victorious  
 Twies on the lond [and] onis on the se, and everywhere  
 He was nat hardi, but malicious; beaten by the  
 1600 Romans and  
 In eueri bataile his custum was to flee. always forced  
 to flee, shews  
 Wher vices regne ther may no grace bee; that where  
 vices reign  
 To al surfetis his lust he dede applie, there is no  
 grace.  
 Noised and disclaundred thoruhout his contre 1604  
 Of niht excesse, riot and lecherie.  
 Among his lieges wood & despitous,  
 And for a coward knowe in the feeld was he;  
 1608 Cruel to  
 The poore toppresse a wolff most furious, his subjects  
 and a coward,  
 And be deceit a fox for subtilite: no man was  
 more perverse  
 No man mor froward, of hih nor lough degre, or fond of  
 falsehood and  
 Nor mor delityng in falsheed nor flatrie. flattery; and  
 his end was  
 sudden death.

1576. his] that R, om. H, this R 3.

1577. sore] om. H. 1581. Dodovian H, R 3, Dodavian R, Do-  
 doncan P, Dodouyan, B, H 5.

1585. temple] peple H.

1598. *This and the next stanza are transposed in R.*

1605. riot] pride R.

What was his eende? a sodeyn deth, parde, 1612  
For his outrages of pride & lecherie.

Noble Princes,  
remember that  
if you are  
virtuous you  
will prosper.  
Antiochus was  
cast down for  
his pride, riot  
and lechery.

Noble Princis, of prudence ful famous,  
In al your grettest roial mageste,  
Remembreth pleynli, yif ye be vertuous, 1616  
Ye shal perseuere in long prosperite,  
Wher the contrarie causeth aduersite,  
As this stori afforn doth specefie  
Of Anthiochus, cast from his dignite 1620  
For his gret pride, riot & lecherie.

¶ Explicit.

[How Ieronimus of Ciracuse kyng was slayn, and  
how Scipio Affrican that labored for common  
wele of Romayns was exilid bi them and so  
deied.]<sup>1</sup>

After the death  
of Antiochus,  
came Hieron of  
Syracuse, who  
was innocently  
slain together  
with his three  
dear sisters by  
his hateful  
subjects.

A FFTIR the deth of this Antiochus,  
Ther cam a prince to Bochas compleynng,  
Which that callid was\* Ieronimus, 1624  
Of Siracuse whilom lord & kyng.  
Which of his lieges, he nothyng trespacynng,  
Islay[e]n was with his thre sustren deere  
Of hatrede, myn auctour writ so heere. 1628

The people of  
Syracuse were  
fickle and in  
the habit of  
killing their  
kings on  
occasion, so  
that they  
could have  
a new one.

Siracusany hadde a condicioun,  
Thoruh chaunges newe ay to been vnstable,  
Of wilful malis void of al resoun  
On ther kynges for to be vengable; 1632  
Thei loued nat to han hem perdurable,  
But eueri yeer of custum, this is trewe,  
Them to gouerne to han a prince newe.

And since they  
were forever  
fighting and  
unfruitful in  
their lives, I  
shall pass over  
and speak of  
the Scipios.

And for ther chaunges & ther vnkouth stryues, 1636  
With variaunce of ther condiciouns,  
Because no frut is founde in ther lyues,  
Nor in ther stories nor ther\* successiouns,  
I will passe ouer & speke of Scipiouns, 1640  
And first to write of the worthi man  
Callid in his tyme Scipio Affrican.

1624. was callid B, R, J — Ieromyus H, Ieromynus R 3, Hieronimus P.

1627. thre] om. R. 1639. ther ] in ther B, R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 113 recto.

- A famous kniht in al[le] naciouns  
 For his conquest, shortli to conclude,  
 Which hadde brouht ful many regiouns,  
 Mor be wisdam than be multitude,  
 Tobeie the Romeyns; but for ingratitude,  
 Which that he fond in hem, as I reede,  
 How he wrouhte to telle I wil proceede.
- 1644 Scipio Africanus was a wise and famous knight whom the Romans treated with great ingratitude.
- 1648
- It is remembrid of his worthynesse,  
 Whil that he was flouryng in yong age,  
 How Roome was maad[e] ladi and maistresse  
 Of many a lond[e], to ther auauntage.  
 And specialli al Affrik & Cartage  
 Bi his prowesse, as maad is menciuon,  
 Wer brouht of Romeyns vndir subieccioun.
- 1652 although it was he who brought so many lands under their subjection.
- 1656
- But thei ageynward wer to hym vnkynde,  
 Bi accusacioun[s] founde out bi ther falsnessis,  
 Saide ageyn hym, as it is put in mynde,  
 Be record of many fals witnessis,  
 That he shold have besiled the richessis  
 Of Cartage & Affrik the contre,  
 Which appartened to Roome the cite.
- 1660 They falsely accused him of misappropriating the wealth of Carthage and Africa.
- But ageynward this noble Affrican  
 Proudli gaff ansuere to his accusours:  
 He neuer withheld fro tyme that he began  
 Toward hymself no part of ther tresours,  
 Sauf as the maner is of conquerours,  
 For to conserue his worshep & his name,  
 As most was proffit to the toune[s] fame.
- 1664 But noble Africanus answered them proudly that he never took more than was necessary
- 1668
- This is to meene, pleynli & nat tarie,  
 He neuer acrochid tresour nih nor ferre  
 Toward hymself, but that was necessarie  
 For ther worshep to meynteene *with* the werre.  
 And yit that tyme he was ther lodesterre,  
 Tenrece ther boundis, & fulli his delit  
 Was al hool set to the comoun proffit.
- [p. 279] for the maintenance of the war.  
 1672
- 1676

1651. yong] *om.* H.1652. maistresse] *prynesse* H, R 3.1653. lond] *toun & londe* H.1658. accusaciouns] *occasiouns* H — *falsnessis* *falsnesse* J, P, *falsnes* R 3.1660. wytnes R 3. 1661. riches R 3. 1662. &] *in* R.1674. the] *ther* H, R, J, P.

- Their malicious ingratitude drove him into voluntary exile. He took non heed of al the surplusage  
Of ther tresours nor ther gret richesse,  
The name reserued of Affrik & Cartage  
To his knythod and his hih noblesse. 1680  
But ther malicious expert vnkyndenesse  
Was in cause, breeffli to compile,  
His bodi fro them perpetueli texile. 1684
- and resolving never again to appear in Rome he abode in a small village. Cast hym neuer withynne Roome toune  
Aftir that day among hem to be seyn,  
Vnkyndenesse gaff hym occasioun  
Tabsente his persone, & of hih disdeyn 1688  
Texile hymself & neuer come ageyn,  
But for tabide in a smal village  
Callid Lynterne, whan he was falle in age.
- He wrote his own epitaph, saying that neither his bones nor his ashes should ever repose within the walls of Rome. And for men sholde mynde vpon hym haue  
Bi a maner of indignacioun,  
An epitaphie he sette upon his graue, —  
Which seide thus to them of Roome toune:  
“ O peeple vnkynde, vnkynde ageyn resoun,  
My funerall asshes nor my bonis dede 1696  
In thi wallis thou neuer shalt posseede.
- “My bones shall not rest in thy froward ground, and the remembrance of thine ingratitude shall be knowne far and wide by this small inscription cut on my tomb. In thyn vnkynde froward teritorie  
My bonys shal nat resten nor abide; 1700  
But thyn vnkyndenesse to putten in memorie,  
The remembraunce shal be rad ful wide  
Of thes lettres graue, on eueri side,  
Be report onli of this smal scripture, 1704  
Which heer is set upon my sepulture.
- “That is why my funeral was held in exile, although I did so much for the community.” Loo, heer the cause, be brief descripcioun  
Set on my graue for a memoriall,  
Whi that my bonys out of Roome toune 1708  
Been buried heer lowe vndir this wall,  
In exil holde my feeste funerall, —  
Vnkyndenesse me droff from\* that cite,  
That wrouhte so moche for the comounte.” 1712

1684. frome H.

1690. tabide] shall dwell H.

1698. shalt] shall H, R 3.

1702. The] To R.

1711. from] out of B, R, J, P, out fro H 5, fro R 3.

[How Scipio Asian lord of Asie pat labored euer for  
the comon wele was mordred.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FTIR the eende of this Affrican,  
Callid in his tyme worthi Scipioun,  
Cam next his brothir, Scipio Asian,  
Which in Asie hadde domynacioun.  
Geyn whom was made an accusacioun  
To al the senat, that he vntreuli sholde  
Certeyn tresours toward hymselff withholde,

1716 His brother,  
Scipio Asian,  
was also  
enviously  
accused of  
appropriating to  
himself certain  
treasures

Which that he in Asia hadde wonne  
In his conquest be many strong bataille.  
Which accusacioun falsli was begonne  
Of old envie, causeles, this no faile;  
Whos worthynesse ful mekil dede auaille  
To comoun proffit, be thes too conquerours,  
Bi gret richesse encresyng ther tresours.

1720 which he had  
won in Asia,  
together  
with many  
lands, for the  
common profit.

The ton in Affrik, as ye haue herd me tell,  
Bi his wisdam & his cheualrie,  
The tothir in Asia, which dede excell  
In hih prowessse, as bookes specefie.  
Falsli hyndred of hatreede & envie,  
Bi compassyng of oon Anthiochus,  
Hym to destroie he was so desirous.

1728 And this was  
done by the  
compassing of  
one Anthiochus,  
who wished to  
destroy him.

Natwithstondyng thes tweyne Scipiouns  
Hadde in ther tyme, be manyfold batailles,  
Brouht into Roome so many regiouns  
Tobeie ther cite, with marcial apparailles,  
And euermor[e] to ther gret auailles  
Brouht in tresours tencrece with ther toun,  
Yit han thei wrouhte to ther destruccioun.

1736 Such was the  
ingratitude with  
which these  
two able men  
were treated.

The ton in exil, as maad is menciou, n,  
Deied, alas, whan that he was old;  
The second was moordred in prisoun:  
Ther bothe stories remembrid heer & told  
To yue exaample to princis manyfold,  
That who that laboureth for a comounte  
Leseth ofte his thank, be Scipiouns ye may see.

1744 Scipio Asian  
was murdered  
in prison,  
Africanus died  
in exile; and  
their stories  
are remembered  
here to shew  
princes that  
those who  
labour for the  
community  
receive small  
thanks.

1732. Antiochus H, R, J.

1735; 37, 38. bataile, apparaile, availe H, R 3. 1747. often H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 113 verso.

[How the Duk philopomones was take, put in prisoun,  
aftir drank poison and so deied.]<sup>1</sup>

Duke  
Philopœmen,  
who ruled  
Messenia during  
the war between  
Achaia and  
Ætolia,

**A**FFTIR the processe of thes too Scipiouns, 1748  
Atween too peeplis\* wilful & rekles  
Began in Grece newe discenciouns,  
Tween Acheois & Etholois dout[e]les.  
And a gret duk Philopomones, 1752  
A prince that tyme of ful gret puissaunce,  
Hadde of Messoneys hooli the gouernaunce.

led his own army  
into battle on a  
fair plain,

This said[e] prince Philopomones, [p. 280]  
Leedyng his host upon a ful fair pleyn, 1756  
As he rood armed, & put hymself in pres  
Mid his peeple as gouernour & wardeyn,  
Folk out of reule for to calle ageyn,  
Vpon his steede, as he gan hem fette, 1760  
In deu ordre his wardes for to sette.

and was  
taken captive  
by his enemies  
and put into  
prisoun where he  
died by drinking  
poison.

And this prince\*, of port most marcial,  
In the pursut which that he gan make,  
Among his enmyes he hadde a sodeyn fall, 1764  
Void of al rescus vnwarli he was take,  
Of al his freendis lik a man forsake,  
Among his enmyes brouht into prisoun,  
Ther maad an eende be drynkyng of poisoun. 1768

He was  
succeeded by a  
captain called  
Lycortas.

Of Philopomones this was the fatal cas,  
Out of gouernaunce, his peeple desolat,  
Except a capteyn callid Ligorias,  
Which in the werris was wonder fortunat, 1772  
Of Acheois took on hym the estat,  
Them to gouerne & the peeple leede,  
Of hym no mor in Bochas I do reede.

[Off the thirde Scipion Nasica that euer wrouht  
moche for the comonte.]<sup>2</sup>

The third  
Scipio, Nasica,  
surpassed all  
other Romans  
in wisdom and  
courage.

**M**YN auctour heer maketh a digressioun, 1776  
And reherseth for a memorial  
Of the thridde worthi Scipioun,  
Callid Nasica, which in especiall

1749. peeple B. 1751. Etholois] Messanians P.

1754. Messoneys] Messonoys H, Achaia P.

1758. myddes H. 1759. for] om. R. 1760. his] a H.

1762. this prince] thes princis B. 1763. he] thei H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 113 verso. <sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 114 recto.



- Be disposioun verray naturall 1780  
 Hold among Romeyns, bi report of langage,  
 Passyng al othir in wisdam & corage,
- Old of discrecioun & but\* yong of yeeris.  
 For a myracle, myn auctour doth expresse, 1784  
 Whan senatours sente massageris  
 Into Frigia bi gret auisynesse  
 For Berosynthia, most famous goddesse,  
 Whan she was brouht bi them that ded hir guide, 1788  
 In hous nor temple she wolde nat abide,
- Sauf in the paleis of this Scipioun,  
 To putte his name mor in remembraunce.  
 The which also, thoruh his hih renoun, 1792  
 Gallobois he brouhte to vttraunce,  
 A peeple off Grece, ferr out of gouernaunce;  
 But Scipioun gan hem so werreie,  
 Maugre ther malis the Romeyns for to obeye. 1796
- Wherbi his name was put in memorie,  
 And ful gret thank in Roome he hath disserued,  
 Because onli of this gret victorie,  
 For which the tryumphe was to hym reserued. 1800  
 But at the laste ful falsli he was serued  
 Of the Romeyns aftir ther old maneer,  
 In this tragedie anon as ye shal heer.
- Aftir he hadde aumentid ther tresours, 1804  
 Conquered in Asie many regiouns,  
 Caused of ther foon that thei wer victours,  
 Appesid of Graccus the fals occasiouns,  
 Compassed of malis be newe discenciouns 1808  
 Atween the peeple & also the senat, —  
 He of hih wisdam hath stynt al that debat.
- Trustyng the Romeyns, Scipioun was begiled,  
 Loste ther fauour, & offendid nouht; 1812  
 Be them vnwarli bashed & exiled,  
 Cleene forgetyn; put out of ther thouht  
 For comoun proffit al that he hath wrouht.  
 The guerdoun lost, thoh princis canat see, 1816  
 Of al that doon for any comounte.

When the  
 Senate sent  
 messengers to  
 Phrygia for  
 the goddess  
 Berecynthia,

she would not  
 abide anywhere  
 except in  
 Scipio's house,  
 which was a  
 miracle.

He also brought  
 the Gallobois to  
 uttraunce, and  
 deserved great  
 thanks of Rome  
 and was given  
 a triumph;

but at the last  
 he was treated  
 with  
 ingratitude.

He lost the  
 favour of the  
 Romans and  
 was banished  
 and forgotten —  
 the usual reward  
 of those who  
 labour for the  
 common weal.

1783. but] nat but B, R, J, P.

1799. this] his R, J, P — gret] om. H, R 3.

- Their popularity is like a wisp of flame or a momentary glimpse of the sun through clouds. Lik a blase for a w[h]ile liht,\*  
Which sheweth [ful] cleer & is neuir aftir seyn,  
Or lik a sonne for a moment briht, 1820  
Vnwarli shroudid w[ith] a cloude of reyn,  
Riht so the wyndi fauour bloweth in veyn,  
May resemble for a mutabilite,  
Of them that doon for any comounte. 1824
- The people are as fickle in their opinions as so many Blind Bayards; The peple folweth ther owne oppynyouns,  
In ther conceitis thei be so wonderful;  
Will halt the bridil of ther discreciouns:  
Ther hasti deemyng so bestial is & dull, 1828  
On blynde Baiard thei braiden at a pull,  
To quite the guerdouns of marcial bounte  
Of them that doon for any comounte.
- the fame of a prince is lifted to the stars to-day and obscured to-morrow. This day a prince stant in the peeplis grace, 1832  
Lik as thei wolde his name deife  
Aboute the sterris in Iubiteris place,  
With Mars & Phebus his name to stellefie;  
But be to-morwe ther komth a sodeyn skie, 1836  
Shewyng ther is a ful feynt surete  
Of them that doon for any comounte.
- We need only remember the fate of the three Scipios. And for tafferme that it is treuli so, [p. 281]  
Calle thre Scipiouns [un]to remembraunce: 1840  
First of Affrik & Asie, bothe too;  
Note in cronicles ther knihtli gouernaunce,  
Ther restles labour Romeyns for tauaunce,  
Rekne ageynward how thes princis thre 1844  
Wer ful vngoodli quit bi the comounte.

## ¶ Lenvoy.

- This tragedy of these worthy notable men, who made so many regions subject to Rome THIS tragedie of thre Scipiouns,  
[That wer] so worthi in knyththod &\* notable,  
Made so many famous regiouns 1848  
Subiect to Roome (this stori is no fable),  
Wher the Romeyns, double & deceyuable,  
Shewed ageynward to thes princis thre,

1818. liht] briht B, H, R, J. 1819. ful] om. R, J, P.

1820. a] þe H.

1832. *This stanza and the next are transposed in H.*

1839. it] is H. 1840. unto] to J, P. 1845. quit] om. H.

1847. &amp;] &amp; eek B.

- The thank[e] lost & guerdoun couenable 1852  
 Of hym that doth for any comounte.
- Rekne up in Affrik the cites & the touns, in both Africa  
and Asia, with  
vast revenues,  
 Grete Cartage with castellis deffensable;  
 Rekne in Asie the gret pecessiouns 1856  
 With reuenus verray innumerable;  
 Rekne ther tryumphes of pris incomparable,  
 Which considred, ye may a merour see,  
 How the guerdouns be fals & flaskisable 1860  
 Of them that doon for any comounte.
- Thei wer whilom the Romeyn champiouns, and who,  
once the  
champions of  
their nation,  
were  
finally thrown  
down from  
Fortune's wheel,  
 Off senatours to sette the honour stable, 1864  
 Tauoid discord & al discenciouns  
 Atween the comouns & statis honourable;  
 But she that is of custum ay chaungable,  
 Fortune, in whom may be no surete,  
 Sheweth in hir wheel the guerdouns most mutablē 1868  
 Of them that doon for any comounte.
- Noble Princis, peiseth in your resouns, shews, Noble  
Princes, that all  
earthly things  
are unstable,  
even your own  
domination.  
 Al worldli thyng in erthe is transmutable, 1872  
 Feynt & vnseur your domynaciouns,  
 Chartre\* is ther non to make hem perdurable.  
 Sorwe at departyng your bodies corumpable,  
 A thyng rassembleyng that neuer hadde be,  
 Record on Scipiouns be guerdouns rassembleable 1876  
 Off them that doon for any comounte.
- Trusteth neuer in your oppynyouns, Know only that  
your power is  
transitory;  
do not allow  
yourselves to  
be made blind  
to the play  
of Fortune.  
 But that your poweer is ech day remeuable. 1880  
 Beeth nat maad blynd in your discreciouns,  
 But considreth bexaumples resonable  
 The play of Fortune lik hasard retournable  
 With sodeyn chaung of fals felicite,  
 Vnto the guerdouns daili comparable 1884  
 Of them that doon for any comounte.

¶ **Explicit lenvoye.**

1858. ther] be H.

1859. ye] I, H.

1870. peiseth] remembrith H.

1873. Chartre] Charite B, R, H, Cherite J, Chartyr H 5, Chartre  
 K 3, P.

[How Duk Hanyball aftir many victorius dedes  
moordred himsilf with poison.]<sup>1</sup>

The famous  
prince Hannibal,  
who hated the  
Romans and  
daunted their  
power, next  
appeared before  
Bochas.

**N**EXT [in ordre] to Bochas, as I reede,  
Out of Affrik & Cartage, perwithal  
Ther cam a duk þat hadde most hatrede 1888  
Ageyn the Romeyns in especial,  
This famous prince callid Hanyball,  
Bi whos prowesse, as it is weel knowe,  
The seid Romeyns wer dauntid & brouht lowe. 1892

Not only did  
his horoscope  
foretell his  
inclinations,

And among othir worthi dukes alle,  
As olde cronicles make mencioniun,  
Of Hanybal the fate is so befallē,  
At his berthē bi disposicioun, 1896  
That of his natural constellacioun  
Set in the heuene, that he sholde bee  
Perpetueli enemy to Roome the cite.

but when a boy  
he swore that he  
would always  
be an enemy  
of Rome.

As the stori of hym doth deuise, 1900  
Whil his fader, duk whilom of Cartage,  
Callid Amulchar dede onys sacrificē  
To his goddis, & he nyne yeer of age,  
Swor & avowed, of herte & of corage, 1904  
Duryng his lyff withoute excepcioun  
Euer to been enemy vnto Roome touñ.

He was the  
mighty wall of  
Carthage, who,  
succeeding to  
his father,  
Hasdrubal,

This Martis child, this lusti yonge kniht  
Was to Cartage the strong[e] myhti wall, 1908  
Which succeedid in his fadris riht  
Aftir the deth of worthi Hastruball.  
First he made a werre ful mortall  
Geyn Saguntynois, as it is specefied, 1912  
Cause with Romeyns that thei wer allied.

dreamt that he  
should conquer  
Spain and  
Italy.

A drem he hadde; & was thus in sentence: [p. 282]  
That he sholde conuere in bataille, 1916  
Maugre al tho that stoden at diffence,  
Too myhti contrees, first Spaigne & than Itaille,  
Down descendyng with gret apparaille,  
Passyng the famous ryueer Iberius,  
And wher he rood alway victorius. 1920

1899. enemy] *om.* H.

1902. Amilchar P. 1904. avowed] avoied R.

1910. the] his R. 1912. Saguntines P.

1914. thus] this H, R 3, thys H 5.

1919. hiberus H, R 3, Iberous P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 114 recto.

With hym of Affrik many cheunteyns  
 Rood thoruh Gaule, fond no resistance,  
 Of Pirenes bi the hih mounteyns  
 To shewe the rigour of his magnificence,  
 Ouer the Alpies be sturdi violence,  
 Natwithstandyng the passage was ful wikke,  
 Of slidyng frostis & of snowis thikke.

1924 He first subdued Spain, and, crossing the Pyrenees, rode through Gaul and down over the Alps into Italy.

A gret[e] parti of his men he\* loste  
 Bi the constreynt of that fell passage,  
 Hors, olefantis, that many besaunt coste,  
 Fond gret daunger off them in his cariage.  
 Assaut of brigauntis, whan thei fond auantage; 1932  
 And as Bochas put in remembraunce,  
 Felte gret losse of al his ordenaunce.

1928 losing many of his men and horses and elephants in the passage.

The Alpies passid with trauaile & gret wo,  
 This Hanybal with al his cheualrie  
 Approched is the ryueer off the Poo,  
 Cam to a touñ that callid is Cursie,  
 Which stand upon the cite of Pauye,  
 Wher a consul named\* Scipioun  
 Gaff hym bataille euene affor the touñ.

1936 Approaching the River Po, he defeated Gneus Scipio at Pavia,

The same consul, Gneus Scipioun,  
 Which bi prowessse\* of manli Hanyball  
 Was disconfited, as maad is mencioun,  
 Tofor Pauye hadde a riht foul[e] fall:  
 The first victorie in especiall  
 That he hadde beyounde the mounteyns,  
 Whan he purposed\* tassaile the Romeyns.

1940

1944

1948

Sempronyus, a-nother consuleer,  
 That was felawe to said[e] Scipioun,  
 Sent eek fro Roome with a ful proud cheer  
 Geyn Hanyball; but in his comyng doun  
 Tofor Tresbie, a large myhti touñ,  
 Outraied was bi fatal auenture  
 And aftir neuer myhte his fall recure.

1952

as well as Sempronius, who had been sent from Rome against him.

1922. Rood] And R.

1928. men he] peepel B, R, J, P. 1931. Fond] And R.

1938. touñ] hil P — Cursie] Curye H, Curye R 3, Currye H 5,  
 Ticinie P.

1939. upon] nighe P. 1940. named] callid B, J, R, P.

1943. prowessse] processe B, R, J. 1945. foule] full R.

1948. purposed] pursued B, R, J. 1950. the seyð R.

1951. fro] to R.

Off too consuleris this was the wooful fyn, 1956  
Sempronyus & Gneus Scipioun.

Ouer the mounteyn callid Appenyn  
Wente Hanybal, thoruh his hih renoun,  
To gret damage & gret confusioun 1960  
Of his peeple that passid the mounteyns,  
Destroied with cold, gret snowh & hidous reyns.

He then crossed the Apennines, where many of his men died of accident and exposure. He himself escaped on an elephant, but lost one of his eyes.

Loste his knihtis, his tresours & his goodis,  
Ther myht as tho be maad[e] no diffence; 1964  
His grete steedes drowned in the floodes  
Bi the watris myhti violence,  
Fond for the tyme no bettir resistence,  
Sauf he eskaped fro that sodeyn wrak, 1968  
Of an olyfaunt, he ridyng on the bak.

So importable was his greuouse payne,  
Onli born up of marcial corage,  
Yit ther he lost oon of his eyen tweyne, 1972  
Kept of knihthod o cheer & o visage.  
Thoruh Itaille heeld alwey his passage,  
Slouh a consul callid Flamynyus;  
Thus in thre batailles he was victorious. 1976

Afterwards he defeated and slew Flaminius.

Finally Quintus Fabius, seeing that no Roman captain could conquer him, invented a new method of fighting by ambush and constant harassing,

But in this while, as seith myn auctour,  
Quyntus Fabius, subtil & deceyuable,  
Which was in Roome a famous dictatour,  
And he apparceyued\* be toknes ful notable, 1980  
No Romeyn capteyn was in tho daies able,  
As it was shewed be experience,  
Geyn Hanybal to make resistence.

Yit in his conceit he subtili gan serche; 1984  
To fynde a weie he dede his besi payne,  
Day be day gan felli theron werche,  
Outher be fraude or sum compassid treyne  
To ligge await & secreli ordeyne 1988  
Enbussmentis to his auantages,  
Of Hanybal to stoppe the passages.

1959. hih] gret R. 1961. passid] om. R.

1972. lost he H.

1980. And he] Which H, R 3, H 5, P — apparceyued] apper-  
teyned B.

1984. Yit] But H — his] this R.

1985. he] om. H.

- But al his treynys seruid hym of nouht;  
 For Hanybal, this worthi Affrican, 1992  
 In his conquest so prudentli hath wrouht,  
 So lik a prince & a knihtli man,  
 Fro thilke tyme that he werris gan  
 Ageyn the Romeyns, bothe on se & lond, 1996  
 That thei wer feeble his poweer to withstond.
- This Quintus Fabius kept hym alway cloos, [p. 283] Quintus Fabius,  
 Liggyng await to falle on Hanyball; however, con-  
 And of assent eek to his purpos 2000 tinued his  
 Ther was oon Varo, manli & wis withal. campaign,  
 And so thes tweyne in especial, assisted by  
 Withynne Poile, a large gret contre, Varro;  
 Fauht with Hanybal at Kannes the cite. 2004
- As the stori maketh rehearsaile,  
 The Romeyn parti, of worthi werreiors  
 Wer fourti thousand slay[e]n in bataille:  
 Emylius Paulus, thretti senatours, 2008  
 Twenti in noubre that hadde be pretours,  
 And thre hundred capteyns of estat,  
 Slayn be Hanybal in that mortal debat.
- And bi the slauhtre of Emilius, 2012  
 The noble consul, Romeyns disespeired.  
 And Hanybal, that day victorious,  
 To his loggyng is ageyn repeired,  
 His foon outraied & mortalli appeired, 2016  
 Knew no refut ageyn this manli kniht,  
 But at myscheeff took hem to the fliht.
- The which[e] day, yiff that Hanybal  
 Hadde hem folwed proudli to the touz, 2020  
 Bi the counseil of oon Marthabal,  
 A manli kniht, a prince of hih renoun,  
 He sholde haue had ful pocessioun  
 That day of Roome, lik to his entente, — 2024  
 But I suppose Fortune list nat assente.
- In this processe, pleyntli, as I reede,  
 This Hanybal wex proud & riht pompous, He grew proud  
 Of foure victories dempte hymself in deede 2028 and indolent,

1991. his] thes R.

1997. feblee R — poweer] prowesse H, R 3, H 5.

2004. Cannas R, J, P, Cannes H 5, Cames H, Kannes R 3.

2011. be] with R. 2013. disespeired R.

2019. day] hanyball R. 2021. Mataball H. 2027. &amp;] om. R.

- Aboue al othir to be most glorious,  
Of his corage most inli surquedous.  
But, o alas, a litil slouthe & pride,  
For lak of pursut, his conquest set aside. 2032
- although during the course of the war he had slain so many Romans that three bushels filled with their gold rings were sent home to Carthage. Yit in his conquest, of knihtis that lay ded,  
Of consuleris old & yong of age,  
With senatours, the processe who list reed,  
Slayn in the feeld[e] in that mortal rage, 2036  
Duk Hanybal sente to Cartage,  
Of cleene gold, be record of writyngis,  
Out of the feeld thre busshel ful of ryngis.
- Fortune now became unfavourable. Aftir foure victories heer remembrid, 2040  
Bi and bi the processe, who list see,  
In which[e] many worthi was dismembrid,  
Bothe of Affrik & Roome the cite,  
Abate gan the gret prosperite 2044  
Of Hanybal be froward auenture:  
Set onys bak, hard fortune to recure.
- Wintering at Capua in great luxury. Aftir the flouris of his felicite,  
His noblesse drouh to declynacioun. 2048  
To Capue he wente, a myhti strong cite,  
Ther to soiourne, as maad is menciouen,  
Al the tyme of wyntres cold sesoun,  
Wher to his lust & bodili plesaunce, 2052  
Off al vitaille fond gret habundaunce.
- his soldiers lost much of their martial power through over-indulgence; Which made his knihtis slouh vnto the werre;  
For wyn, wommen and plente of vitaille  
Ful offte sithe cause men to erre, 2056  
Make hem feeble ther enmyes to assaille:\*
- and in the spring, when Hannibal purposed to lay siege to Rome, he was hindered by the rains, Gorges agroteied, enboced ther entraille,  
Disposeth men rather to reste & slepe,  
Than of ther enmyes for to taken keepe. 2060
- But whan wyntir with his frostis colde  
Was ouergon in thilke regioun,  
Hanybal gan his purpos holde,  
To leyn a siege vnto Roome toun. 2064  
But so gret reynys fill from heuen doun,  
So gret[e] tempest vpon eueri side,  
For the constreynt he myht[e] nat abide.

2031. o] om. H. 2036. in] on H.

2047. his] hir H. 2049. Capua P.

2057. to assaille] tassaille B, for tassaile H, R 3, H 5.

2058. Egroteied H, engrosed R 3. 2066. vpon] om. R.



- To fortifie, the said[e] Hanybal,  
 Ageyn his enmyes wher he hadde a-doo,  
 Sente lettres vnto Hastrubal,  
 In riht gret haste for to come hym too.  
 But Fortune hir wheel hath turnid so,  
 That Hastrubal, wher he was loth or fayn,  
 Be Salynator venquissed was & slayn.
- Of which[e] myscheeff & disconfiture  
 Hanybal gan dulle in his corage,  
 Complenyed sore of this mysauenture,  
 Knew no refut ageyn this mortal rage,  
 Herd eek seyn that Affrik & Cartage  
 Were of newe, to his confusioun,  
 Strongli werreyed be worthi Scipioun.
- Siphax also of Numedie kyng,  
 Which ageyn Romeyns gan a werre make,  
 Maugre his myht & al his fel werkyng  
 Was bi force of Scipioun Itake,  
 Wherthoruh his corage gretli gan a-slake.  
 And how Cartage, cheeff of that regeoun,  
 Beseged was also be Scipioun.
- Thus Hanybal constreyned was of neede  
 Hom to repire for rescus off Cartage,  
 And was also, in bookis as I reede,  
 The same tyme falle ferre in age,  
 And at myscheeff & gret disauantage  
 Ageyn Scipioun ful lite[!] myht auaille,  
 Bi whom he was sconfited in bataille.
- Cartage constreynid of necessite,  
 Them to submitte vnto Roome toun;  
 And for ther mor hard aduersite,  
 Gneus Seruilius was fro Rome sent doun,  
 Onli of purpos for this conclusioun:  
 For to procure in especiall  
 Fynal destruccioun & deth off Hanyball.
- Afftir al his marcial labours,  
 His old felicite wex froward & vnmeete,  
 In holuh images put al his tresours,

2068 and failed of  
 his reinforce-  
 ments, owing  
 to the defeat  
 and death of  
 Hasdrubal.

2072

2076 This, together  
 with the news  
 that Scipio was  
 attacking  
 Carthage and  
 had taken  
 Syphax  
 prisoner,  
 dulled his  
 courage.

2080

[p. 284]

2084

2088

2092 Compelled to  
 return home  
 to rescue his  
 city, and grown  
 old, he was  
 beaten by  
 Scipio;

2096 and after  
 Carthage had  
 surrendered,

2100

2104 he hid his  
 wealth in hollow  
 images and  
 went to Crete,

2088. be] of H. 2095. sconfited H.  
 2099. Gneus] Cayus P — Seruilius] Geruilius R — fro rome was  
 H, R 3, H 5.  
 2103. And aftir R.

- Took his passage into the lond of Creete,  
 Found\* Fortune contrarie & vnsueete,  
 Made officeeris keepyn his richesse 2108  
 In the temple of Diane the goddesse.
- and afterwards  
 to Prusias,  
 king of  
 Bithynia, who,  
 threatened by  
 the Romans,  
 Sumwhat for trust & parcel eek for dreede,  
 To fynde socour he wente [un]to the kyng  
 Of Bithynye to helpe hym in his neede, 2112  
 Callid Prusias; but of his komyng  
 The sleihti Romeyns hadde knowlechyng:  
 To Bithynye doun ther lettres sente,  
 "Yif Hanybal scape, echon ye shal repente." 2116
- laid siege to the  
 fortress in which  
 Hannibal had  
 taken refuge.  
 The lettres radde, the kyng the same day  
 Made his peeples besege the dongoun  
 Wher duk Hanybal of truste allone lay.  
 Al destitute whan he knew this tresoun, 2120  
 Tescape his enemyes drank wilfulli poisoun,  
 Ches rather so, sith othir escap was noon,  
 Than in the handis to fallyn of his foon.
- Hannibal, seeing  
 that his position  
 was hopeless,  
 drank poison,  
 praying the  
 gods to take  
 vengeance on  
 Prusias.  
 Toform his deth[e] saide this orisoun, 2124  
 To alle the goddis deuoutli doun knelyng,  
 That thei wolde of this fals tresoun  
 Take vengauce on Prusias the kyng,  
 Which was cause, bi his fals werkyng, 2128  
 Of [the] destruccioun and the deth fynall  
 Of this riht famous worthi Hanyball.

## [Lenvoy.]

- My pen quaked  
 and my heart  
 bled when I  
 wrote this  
 tragedy of  
 Hannibal,  
**T**HIS tragedie froward to write or reede  
 Of this forseid manli Hanyball, 2132  
 My penne quook, myn herte I felte bleede,  
 For to beholde the woful pitous fall  
 Of hym that was the diffensable wall  
 Of Cartage, the stronge myhti toun, 2136  
 Which slouh hymself be drynkyng of poisoun.

2107. Found] And B, R, J, P.

2111. unto] to R, J, P. 2112. his] this H, R 3.

2116. ye] thai H.

2117. The] Thes H.

2120. this] his R.

2129. 1st the] om. H, R, R 3, H 5 — 2nd the] om. J, P.

2130. hastruball H.

It was to hym, he thouhte, mor manheede  
 To slen hymself be vengauce most mortall,  
 Than his enmyes be constreynt sholde hym leede 2140  
 In cheynys bounde, he to be [ther] thrall.  
 So gret despiht he hadde of hem at all,  
 That leuer he hadde, than bide in ther prisoun,  
 To moordre hymself be drynkyng off poisoun. 2144  
 As me seemeth, in this horrible deede  
 He rassembled the furies infernal;  
 Of cruel Pluto I trowe he took his meede,  
 Voide off resoun, [he] becam bestiall. 2148  
 At whos terrible feste funerall,  
 Goddesse Proserpyna cam *with* manes doun,  
 The same tyme whan he drank poisoun.  
 Noble Princis, considreth & take\* heede, 2152  
 Leuyng the surplus his deedis marciall,  
 Knihtli remembreth, & hath in herte hatreede  
 Of his empoisownyng in especiall,  
 Abhomynable to God & man withal, 2156  
 That a prince so famous of renoun  
 Sholde moordre hymself be drynkyng of poisoun.

who thought it more manly to slay himself than to be thrall to his enemies.

It seems to me that he was like one of the Furies of the lower regions. He received his reward of Pluto.

Noble Princes, remember that a self-inflicted death by poison is abominable to God and man.

[How Prusias kyng of Bethenye betraied Hanybal  
 and wolde haue disherite his sone & heir went a  
 beggyng in straunge landys.]<sup>1</sup>

**F**OLWYNG in ordre ther cam to Bochas  
 Of Bithynye the grete myht[y] kyng,  
 Which in his tyme was cal[li]d Prusias,  
 Gretli slaundred & noised of o thyng,  
 That he was fals & double in werkyng,  
 Ageyn the noblesse of his estat roiall, 2160  
 Because that he betraissed Hanyball. 2164  
 This defaute dirked the brihtnesse  
 Of his fame & his knihtli renoun,  
 And eclipsed his passid old prowesse  
 Bi report in many a regeoun. 2168  
 Alas, that euer the condicioun  
 Of doubilnesse bi falsnesse or feynyng,  
 Sholde be founde, a[nd] namli in a kyng! 2172

Next followed Prusias, king of Bithynia, who betrayed Hannibal

[p. 285] and thereby darkened the brightness of his fame.

2168 Alas that treachery should ever be found in a king!

2141. their] *om.* R. 2148. he] *om.* R, J.  
 2150. þe goddesse H. 2152. take] taketh B, J.  
 2155. enpoisounyng H.  
 2162. slaundred] disclaundrid H, dyslandryd H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 116 recto.

- This Prusias had a son called Nicomedes, whom he purposed to deprive of his heritage
- Off this Prusias fether to proceede,  
Which geyn Hanybal wrouhte this tresoun,  
A sone he hadde callid Nichomeede,  
Born to\* been heir be iust successioun. 2176  
But his fader bi fals collusioun  
Purposed hym, for he was yong of age,  
To putte hym out of his heritage.
- because he had a younger son by a second wife.
- In this mateer ther greuh up a gret striff 2180  
Bi Prusias [a]geyn this Nichomeede,  
Cause that he bi his seconde wiff  
Hadde a yong sone, in bookis thus I reede,  
Whom he purposeth to preferre in deede, 2184  
For which he caste, bi short conclusioun,  
Off Nichomeede the destruccioun.
- And for tacomplishe this froward fals mateer,  
Bi ful gret deliberacioun 2188  
Kyng Prusias gan shewen heuy cheer  
Geyn Nichomeede, seekyng occasioun  
To depryue hym off pcessioun,  
Afftir his\* day, bi sotil fals werkyng, 2192  
In Bithynye he shal nat regne as kyng.
- The people saw what he was about and stood by Nicomedes,
- The people seyng this gret iniquite  
Wrouht bi the kyng geyn good[e] conscience,  
Thoruh al the lond, of hih & louh degre, 2196  
To Nichomeede, alle of o sentence,  
Gaff ther good will and ther benivolence,  
For eueri lord and eueri gret baroun  
Stood hool with hym thoruh al the regioun. 2200
- who was crowned king by just title; and Prusias had to beg for his living in foreign lands. Such is the end of treason and deceit.
- Thus bi iust title he was crowned kyng.  
Prusias for shame & heuynesse  
In straunge contrees lyued be beggyng,  
Al desolat cried for almesse. 2204  
Loo, heer the eende of tresoun & falsnesse!—  
Laft\* at myscheeff, myn auctour seith the same,  
Of pouerte forsook his owne name.
- Prusias suffered both for his injustice to Nicomedes and his treachery to Hannibal.
- Seeth heer too thynges, & taketh riht good heede, 2208  
Of Prusias thunwar sodeyn myschaunce,  
The disherityng doon to Nychomeede,

2176. to] be B. 2181. geyn J, R, H, R, 3, H 5.  
2187. for] om. H, R 3, P. 2192. his] this B, R, P.  
2194. gret] om. H. 2199. 1st eueri] euer R.  
2200. the] pat R. 2206. Laft] Last B. 2209. chaunce H.

Aftir folwyng on hym the grete vengauce,  
 As the stori put in remembrance, 2212  
 For tresoun doon odible & mortal  
 Ageyn the forseid famous Hanybal.

[Ho(w) Persa of Macedoyne kyng that enpoisoned  
 his\* brothir/ was bi Emylyus outraied & deied  
 in prisoun.]<sup>1</sup>

**B**ESPREYNT with teris, pitousli weping,  
 As Bochas sat in his studie alone, 2216  
 Next cam Persa, of Macedoyne kyng,  
 And mortalli he gan sihhe & grone  
 And furiously for to make his mone,  
 That he whilom was of so hih renoun, 2220  
 Constreynd afftir to deien in prisoun.

Persa, king of Macedonia, appeared sighing and groaning before Bochas, for, in spite of his great renown, he died in prison.

This said[e] Persa of nature was froward,  
 Euel disposed eek of condicioun,  
 Thoug he of berthe was but a bastard, 2224  
 He compassid bi fals collusioun  
 Afftir his fader to haue pcessioun,  
 As myn auctour remembreth be writyng,  
 Of Macedoyne to be crowned kyng. 2228

He was evil-disposed and a bastard, and in order to become king

His fader Phelipp, the stori tellith thus,  
 Hadde a sone which was yong of age,  
 Wis & redi, callid Demetrius,  
 Born & begete treuli in mariage. 2232  
 But Persa caste bi furious outrage  
 Hym to destroie & moordre be poisoun,  
 He of that kyngdam to haue pcessioun,—

procured the death of his young brother Demetrius, the rightful heir,

Falsli compassed\* to his auantage,  
 In his entent Demetrius to depriue 2236  
 Of Macedoyne, which was his heritage.  
 And therupon he lettres gan contryue  
 To preeue hym tre[i]tour whil he was alyue. 2240  
 Wherof kyng Phelipp gretli was annoyed,  
 That he & Persa sholde be destroyed

by telling Philip, his father, that he was a traitor.

2217. Persa] Persius P.  
 2219. foriously R. 2220. hih] gret R.  
 2222. Persius P. 2224. he of berthe] of birth he H.  
 2236. compassed] compasseth B.  
 2237. his] this H. 2240. on live H.  
 2241. annoyed] Enoiyed H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 116 recto; his is repeated.

- Philip then  
caused  
Demetrius to be  
slain by poison. Be Demetrius, that thouhte no damage,  
Mente non harm in his oppynyoun; 2244  
Yit his fader, suspecious of corage,  
As\* Persa gaff hym fals enformacioun,  
Made hym be slayn be drynkyng of poisoun  
Vpon a day, a thyng abhomynable, 2248  
Sittyng at mete at his fadris table.
- Afterwards when  
he knew the  
truth he died  
of grief, and  
Persa usurped  
the crown, Kyng Phelipp aftir, whan he knew the trouthe, [p.286]  
Hadde of his deth[e] gret compassioun,  
But al to late; & that was ful gret routhe. 2252  
Which caused aftir his owne destruccioun, —  
For sorwe deide; and of presumpcioun,  
Persa afftir, falsli vsurpyng,  
In Macedoyne was c[ro]wnid kyng. 2256
- and, allyng  
himself with  
Greece and  
Thrace, began  
a war against  
Rome. With dyuers contrees made his alliaunce,  
In Grece, &\* Trace gat freendes nih & ferre,  
And of pride & wilful gouernaunce 2260  
Caste with Romeyns for to holde werre.  
Vn grace & youthe made hym for to erre,  
Til a consul sente fro Roome touz  
Brouhte this Persa to destruccioun.
- Æmilius was  
sent against  
him, and  
before the  
battle, seeing  
his daughter  
weep, Callid Emilius was this consuleer, 2264  
Sent ageyn Persa to haue a gret bataille.  
Seyng his douhtir heuy of hir cheer,  
Whan he wente oute his enmyes to assaille,  
Made vnto hire this vnkouth apposaille: 2268  
“Whi weepe ye so? What thyng doth you greeue,  
At my departyng takyng of me leue?”
- discovered  
that it was  
for her whelp  
called Persa,  
which had just  
died; and this  
her father felt  
sure was a  
good omen. “Fader,” quod she, “& ye taken heed,  
A whelpe I hadde that dede me gret plesaunce, 2272  
Callid Persa, the which riht now is ded,  
And this cheef cause onli of my greuaunce.”  
Hir fader thanne gan chaungen contenaunce:  
“This a tokne, to myn ences of glorie, 2276  
That I of Persa shal hauen the victorie.”

2246. As] And B, R, J, P — Persius P.

2256. corownid] crownid H, R, J, R 3, P, corownyd H 5.

2258. &amp;] in B, R, J, R 3, H 5 — frendis gat H.

2262. fro] to R.

2266. heuy] om. H. 2268. opposaille H.

2272. me] om. R, J.

2273. Persius P. 2274. this] thes R.

In Macedoyne he & Persa mette,  
 And quit hym ther lik a manli kniht,  
 Conquereth the lond, non myht[e] hym wibsette, 2280  
 And manli putte Persa to the fiht;  
 Aftir to Trace he took the weie riht.  
 Of which[e] conquest short processe to make,  
 With his too sonys Persa was ther take. 2284

Æmilius put  
 Persa to flight  
 and took him  
 prisoner

Emelius aftir this victorie  
 Axeth the tryumphe vnto his guerdoun;  
 And as it is remembred in historie,  
 Persa folweth his\* char thoruh Rome toun, 2288  
 Condempned aftir to deien in prisoun.  
 The which[e] deth he dede weel disserue,  
 For he be pouison made his brother sterue.

and received the  
 triumph.  
 Persa after-  
 wards died in  
 prison and  
 richly deserved  
 his fate, because  
 he had poisoned  
 his brother.

Thus can Fortune, erli & eek late,  
 Doun from hir wheel & hir hih[e] stage  
 Of proude princis the surquedie abate.  
 Whan to hir lust she seeth most auantage,  
 She frowardli can turnen hir visage, 2292  
 And sodenli thestat of hem consume,  
 About ther offis that wrongli list presume. 2296

Fortune is  
 always able  
 to curb the  
 pride of princes  
 when they  
 presume above  
 their office,

¶ Amongis which, a kyng of Israel,  
 Ageyn the presept and lawe of Moises,  
 Callid Ozias, the Bible kan weel tel,  
 Of presumpcioun wilful & rek[e]les,  
 To sacrefise put hymself in pres,  
 Lik a bisshop in the temple arraied;  
 But or he passid he gretli was affraied, 2304

as did Azariah,  
 who went into  
 the temple  
 dressed as a  
 bishop and  
 demanded to be  
 allowed to make  
 sacrifice,

Lost his speche, [and] smet with meselrie  
 Duryng his lyff: loo, heer a gret vengauce! —  
 Off his crowne & his gerlie 2308  
 Inpotent to vse the gouernaunce,  
 Parcel for pride & disobeissaunce;  
 For he list nat meekli the lawe obeie,  
 For which at myscheef he dede a lepre deie. 2312

for which he  
 lost his speech  
 and died a leper.

2278. Persius P.

2288. his] aftir his B, R.

2292. can] cam R.

2295. lust] lyst R.

2299. Isrell H.

2306. and] om. R, J, P, R 3, H 5.

2309. Impotent H.

[How Amonyus a prince of Antioche delityng in  
pillage and robbery, with other vicious luyng,  
fledde in womannes wede aftir taken and slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

Ammonius, a  
great warrior,  
prince of  
Antioch, robbed  
the rich and  
spoiled the poor,

**N**EXT in ordre, compleynyng his distresse,  
Cam Amonyus, a notable werreiour,  
To Iohn Bochas to shewe his heuynesse,  
In Antioche prince & governour. 2316

Of which contre whil he was pecessour,  
Hadde in custum, & this was his trauaile,  
To robbe the riche & spoille the poraile.

and spared  
neither young  
nor old. As he  
cared for  
nothing but  
women and  
drink,

Spared nouthur old nor yong off age, 2320

Took fro marchauntes tresour & richesse,  
And in delites\* of lecherous outrage\*

Was al his lust, with wach & dronkenesse.  
Will in his court of resoun was maistresse, 2324

Causyng the peple thoruh al the regioun  
To rise ageyn hym bi rebellioun.

his subjects  
rose against  
him, and he  
fled dressed  
as a woman,  
and when  
caught swore  
that he was  
one.

Contrarie he was to al good disciplyne;  
The peple aros ageyn hym on a day, 2328

And he for feer, in habite femynyne,  
Lik a wrechch fledde cowardli away.

Take at myscheeff, was made no delay,  
Falsli confessed\*, heeryng many a man, 2332

Ageyn nature that he was a woman.

But the  
people found  
out the truth,  
and killed him.  
Fortune well  
knows how to  
punish those  
who will not  
follow virtue;

The trouthe knowe and the sclaudre riff, [p. 287]

Alle of assent the peple Antiocheene  
Ros attonys; and so he loste his lyff, 2336

Thei wer so woode ageyn hym in ther teene.

Thus of Fortune the chaunge is alwey seene,  
Fro bet to wers she can so weel transmue  
Thestat of them that wil no vertu sue. 2340

[How Andriscus of lowe birth born hauyng no title  
of Macedoyne kyng was taken and deied in  
prisoun.]<sup>2</sup>

but she is to  
blame when  
she sets an  
unknown boy  
on a throne by  
error, as  
happened to  
Andriscus,

**B**V T of o thyng Fortune is to blame,  
That she is so chaungable of corage,  
To sette a boy, vnknowe of birthe & fame,  
Bi fals error upon a roial stage: 2344

2314. Anonyus R. 2320. age] ages R, J.

2322. delices B, J — outrage] outrages B, J, R.

2332. confessed] confessyng B, R, J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 116 verso.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 117 recto.



For oon Andriscus bi surquedous outrage,  
 Withoute title, be subtil compassyng,  
 Of Macedoyne took on hym to be kyng.

Colour was non his cleyrn to make stable, 2348 who had no  
 Except that he of cheer & off visage to Macedon  
 Was to kyng Phelipp of fetures most semblable, than that he  
 Werbi the peepie in ther furious rage looked like  
 Cauhte oppynyoun, of wilful fals dotage, King Philip,  
 Ageyn resoun, [as] Bochas doth descryue, Persa's father.  
 That kyng Phelipp was rise fro deth to lyue, 2352

Whilom fadir to Persa, as I tolde.  
 And for Andriscus, brouht up in wrechchidnesse, 2356 The people  
 In presence both of yong & old thought that  
 Was bold to cleyrne be title of rihtwisnesse, Philip had  
 Shewyng no ground but personel liknesse, risen from the  
 Mokkyng the peepie, which bi ther fauour dead; and as  
 Of roial dignite reseceyue the honour. 2360 Andriscus was  
 egged on by  
 others, he took  
 possession of  
 the throne.

Thus he that was fostred as a wrech  
 In miserie and eek in pouerte,  
 Fro poore bed his hornis dede up strechche 2364 Afterwards, as  
 To holde a sceptre of kyngli dignite. was to be  
 And bi the support of the comounte expected, he  
 He gan wexe pompous and elat, — became puffed  
 Brouht up of nouht, whan he stood in estat. 2368 up with pride;

Nothyng mor cruel, nor nothyng more vengable, for nothing is  
 Nor mor hasti to execucioun,\* more cruel and  
 Nor mor deynous, nor mor vntretable, supercilious  
 Than whan a beggere hath domynacioun: 2372 than a wretch  
 A curre mor froward than a strong leoun. set in dignity.  
 And semblabli, non so gret cruelte A cur is more  
 As whan a wrech is set in dignite. impudent than  
 a lion.

This Andriscus in his roial chaieer, 2376 He began  
 Texecute his hatful cruelte to malign  
 Gadred peepie in contres ferr & neer against Rome.  
 In Macedoyne; & of old enmyte  
 Began maligne geyn Roome the cite. 2380  
 But to withsette his froward fals entent,  
 Oon Iuencijs, a pretour, was doun sent.

2353. as] *om.* R.

2354. rise] *rysen* R. 2355. to] of R. 2358. be] *his* H.

2370. execucioun]. *do* execucioun B, *do* execucioun R, J, P.

2378. peepis H. 2380. ageyn H. 2381. fals] *om.* R.

2382. Iuuentus P.

Juventus, a  
prator, was  
sent against  
him and  
defeated,  
because of his  
vainglory.

But because that he was negligent,  
And of despiht[e] took of hym non heede, 2384  
He was outraied, & bi Andriscus shent,  
With al the peple that he dede leede.  
But the Romeyns, of hope bet to speede,  
Han sent Metellus, a ful manli kniht, 2388  
To Macedoyne to meete [hym] anon riht.

Metellus then  
set on him  
and took him  
prisoner to  
Rome.

This worthi man list nat longe tarie,  
Set proudli on in hope it sholde auaille, 2392  
Made Macedoyne to Roome tributarie,  
Took Andriscus manli in bataille,  
Brouht hym to Roome with myhti apparaille,  
And made hym lyn fetrid in prisoun  
For his outraious fals presumpcioun. 2396

Thus he was  
chastised for  
being proud and  
disdainful in  
his prosperity.

Thus for his froward vsurpacioun,  
That he was hawteyn in his prosperite, 2400  
Knew nat hymself thoruh fals abusioun,  
Blent with a myst of blynd felicite,  
List nat remembre of his first pouerte,  
Whom to chastise Fortune brouht[e] lowe,\*  
Because he list nat hymselfen for to knowe.

[How Alisaundre ballas kyng of Surre for extor-  
cioun pride and vnkynnesse deied atte mis-  
cheef.]<sup>1</sup>

There was once  
a kyng of  
Syria called  
Alexander  
Balas.

THUS kan this ladi pleyen hir paient 2404  
Bi a maner of deynous mokerie,  
Hir entermes forth serue hem of entent,  
To folk that truste hir onli of folie.  
And to purpos, — whilom of Surrie 2408  
Ther was a kyng, lik as writ Bochas,  
Callid Alisaundre, whos surname was Ballas.

After Antiochus  
Eupator was  
set aside

Of which Ballas to telle the processe,  
First of his risyng & aftir of his fall: 2412  
Anthiochus, the stori berth witnessse,

2389. hym] om. R, P.

2396. fals] fell H. 2398. his] hi H.

2399. fals] his fals H. 2402. lowe] hym lowe B.

2404. pleyen R.

2408. of] in H, R 3, H 5 — Surrie] sutrie R. 2409. as] a H.

2410. was] is H. — whos surname was Ballas] but truly Prom-  
palas P.

2411. Ballas] Prompalus P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 117 recto.

- Callid Eupater, which in especiall  
Cleymed title to thestat roiall,  
Afftir his fader named Anthiochus 2416  
Epiphanes, the stori tellith thus.
- Afftir whos deth the kyngdam of Surrye [p. 288] by Demetrius, a  
Sholde longe be successioun brother of  
Epiphanes,
- To Eupater; & eek for his partie 2420  
Demetrius, hostage in Roome toun,  
Cleymed a title to\* that regeoun  
Of Surrye, because Epiphanes  
Was brothir\* to hym, this stori is no les. 2424
- Demetrius fro Roome is come doun  
Into Surrye to cleyme his heritage,  
Resceyueth the crowne [&] took pecessioun,  
Gan wexe proud, presumptuous of corage. 2428  
Thus Eupater, that was but yong of age,  
Excludid was in Surrie to succede.  
Of Demetrius ferther thus I reede:
- Outraious he was aboue mesure, 2432 and behaved so  
Riht vengable & ful of cruelte, outrageously  
Hatful also to eueri creature, that all men  
And heuy born of worthi kynges thre; hated him.
- First in Egipt of worthi Tholome, 2436  
And off Attilius in Asie tho regnyng,  
And Arirarches in Capadoce kyng,—
- Alle of assent ageyn hym han conspired,  
Fond a weie Demetrius to depryue, 2440  
His vndoing so sore thei ha[ue] desired.  
And ther entent texecute blyue,  
Thei gan a fable of purpos to contryue,  
As ye shal heere, togidre as thei wente, 2444  
To which al Surrye attonys dede assente.
- Thei took a galaunt born of louh lynage,  
Callid Ballas, of ther aqueyntaunce,  
And affermede, al of o corage, 2448  
How he was sone & iust heir in substauce  
To Epiphanes, & next heir in alliaunce,  
To succede, bi toknis affermyng,  
Next in Surrye to be crownid kyng. 2452

Demetrius grew  
proud and  
presumptuous

and behaved so  
outrageously  
that all men  
hated him.

Ptolemy,  
Attalus  
and Ariarthes  
conspired  
against him  
and,

taking a low-  
born youth  
named Balas,  
maintained  
that he was  
the son of  
Epiphanes and  
rightful heir to  
the throne.

2422. to] in B, R, J. 2424. brothir] brouht B.

2427. &] om. R. 2436. worthi] gret H, R 3.

2437. Attilius] Actilius J, R 3, Attalus P.

2438. Ariarathes P. 2447. Ballas] Prompalus (ibrought) P.

They called  
him Alexander  
and made him  
king in spite  
of Demetrius.  
First beaten by  
Demetrius, he  
afterwards  
overcame him;

Alisaundre of purpos thei hym calle,  
Because thei thouhte of persone he was able;  
Set hym up in his roiall stall,  
Maugre Demetrius, cruel & vengable. 2456  
And Fortune was to them fauourable,  
Made ther purpos fynalli tauaille,  
With whom Demetrius hadde a gret bataille.

This Alisaundre, which namyd was Ballas, 2460  
Be Demetrius, as put is in memorie,  
First ouercome; but\* aftir fill this caas,  
He of Demetrie hadde the victorie,  
An[d] to ences of his roial glorie, 2464  
Of fortune be sodeyn auenture  
Ballas the feeld dede on hym recure.

but as soon as  
he was crownid  
king he became  
a tyrant and  
was ungrateful  
to his  
benefactors.

Thus be promocioun of thes kynges thre,  
Whan he was crownid kyng of al Surrye, 2468  
To fals extorsioun & hatful cruelte  
This Alisaundre his wittis dede applie,  
To robberyng, pillage and eek tyrannye,  
And despised, shortli to conlude, 2472  
The said[e] kynges of ingratitude.

He no longer  
knew himself,  
and married  
Cleopatra,  
Ptolemy's  
daughter,

He hadde forget his staat of pouerte,  
Knew nat hymself, of fals ambicioun 2476  
Weddid\* the douhtr of myhti Tholome,  
Callid Cleopatra, as maad is menciouun.  
And al his labour in concliouun  
Was onli this, in Bochas as I reede,  
Al the kyngdam[ys] aboute hym to posseede. 2480

and coveted all  
the kingdoms  
about him.  
Finally he  
made war on  
the three  
kings.

Who al coueiteth, sumtyme al doth leese;  
Oon ageyn alle hath seelde souereynte.  
And for Ballas frowardli gan\* cheese  
To holde werre with kyng Tholome, 2484  
And with the forseid worthi kynges thre,  
Alle off assent[e] haue such weies souht,  
That be ther werkyng he was brouht to nouht.

Ptolemy took  
his wife away  
from him and  
gave her to  
one Demetrius,

First Tholome from hym took his wiff, 2488  
Cleopatra, & gaf hir in mariage  
To oon Demetrie, causyng ful gret striff,

2461. Demetrius] Detryus H.

2462. ouercomen B, J — but] & B, R, J, and P.

2467. be] om. H.

2476. Weddid] Weddith B, R, J, R 3.

2480. kyngdam R. 2483. gan] can B.

For he that tyme was but yong of age;  
 But Ballas aftir, be ful gret outrage, 2492  
 With al his poweer, gadred nih & ferre,  
 Geyn Demetrie gan to holde werre.

Togidre mette proudli in bataille,  
 Ballas constreyned cowardli to flee; 2496  
 And whan he sauh his poweer dide faile,  
 In Arabie, a myhti strong contre,  
 Zabidus, a prince of gret pouste,  
 Took hym be force, he quakyng in his dreed, 2500  
 To kyng Tholome sent anon his hed.

whom Balas  
 attacked, but  
 was forced to  
 flee to Arabia,  
 where he was  
 slain and his  
 head sent to  
 Ptolemy.

Men may too thynges considren in this caas: [289]  
 Pride pun[y]shed and vnkyndenesse,  
 And presumpcioun, in this man Ballas, 2504  
 Withoute title or cleym of rihtwisnesse  
 Maad kyng of Surrie, set in gret worthynesse.  
 What was his eende? ye get no mor of me, —  
 His hed smet of & sente to Tholome. 2508

### Lenvoye.

**T**HIS tragedie doth naturalli compleyne  
 Vpon this vice callid vnkyndenesse,  
 Which to pun[y]she is torment non nor peine,  
 Rigour condigne, flagelle nor duresse, 2512  
 Enprisownyng nor non erthli distresse,  
 That may suffise, breeffli to conclude,  
 Ageyn the vice of ingratitude.

No punishment  
 is too severe  
 for ingratitude.

Alle creaturis on this vice compleyne, 2516  
 Lawe, nature decrees rihtwisnesse;  
 This monstre in kynde doth the liht desteyne,  
 Of eueri vertu dirketh the brihtnesse.  
 Alisaundre can bern herof wittenesse, 2520  
 Which to his foorthris, he of techchis rude  
 Shewe[d] ageynward gret ingratitude.

It darkens the  
 brightness of  
 every virtue.

2498. contre] Cite H.

2500. *This line is replaced by the next to last of preceding stanza* H.

2521. forthereres R, H 5, forthereres H, J, furthers P — of] of  
 his R, J.

The treble chain of Cerberus, the hunger and thirst of Tantalus, the torments of Ixion and Typhon, were insufficient to chastise those who are ungrateful to their old friends. Noble Princes, do not allow ungrateful folk to approach you; no vice is more hateful than theirs.

Of Herberus thynfernal treble cheyne,  
 Nor of Tantalus hunger nor thrustnesse, 2524  
 Of Ixion or Ticius, bothe tweyne,  
 Rekne the[r] turment, remembre ther sharpnesse;  
 Al wer to lital to chastise or redresse  
 The hatful vice of them that can delude 2528  
 Ther freendis olde bi fals ingratitude.  
 Noble Princis, which in your demeyne  
 Han gouernaunce of al worldli richesse,  
 Geyn folk vnkynde looke that ye disdeyne, 2532  
 Suffre\* hem nat haue non interesse  
 For taproche to your hih noblesse;  
 For ther is no vice mor hatful to conclude,  
 Than is the vice of ingratitude. 2536

[Here Bochas writeth of the rebellions and seditions in Rome, betwixt Tribunys and comouns.]<sup>1</sup>

I must now write about Caius and Tiberius Gracchus, who were authors of great seditions in Rome.

**F**OLWYNG myn auctour in stories merveilous,  
 I mut now write the strong rebelliouns  
 Of Gaivs first & of Tiberius,  
 And of ther grete hatful sediciouns 2540  
 Meued in Roome tween tribuns & comouns;  
 And bi ther stryues how thei gan conspire  
 For tatteyne falsli to thempire.

Caius was made tribune in the Roman year 600,

The yeer sixe hundred be computacioun, 2544  
 Gayus Gracchus maad tribun in that age,  
 Aftir the cites first fundacioun,  
 Which turnyd aftir to ful gret damage  
 Of comoun proffit; for bi the\* mortal rage, 2548  
 Tumulte & noise of comouns in the toun,  
 Caused a gret part of ther destruccioun.

and by his equal division of the public lands between rich and poor he caused dissensions among the people.

For in departyng of chaumpayne heritages  
 Atwen the worthi & poore of the cite 2552  
 Bi egal porciouns, Gracchus with fair langages  
 Hadde gretli meued al the\* comounte.  
 Bi which occasioun, in stori men may see,  
 Anothir Gracchus, callid the secounde, 2556  
 Was slayn in Roome & lowe leid on grounde.

2523. Cerberus H. 2524. thrustynesse H.

2526. 2nd ther] the R, J. 2533. Suffre] Suffreth B, J.

2535. to] om. R.

2540. ther] the R. 2548. the] ther B, R, J. 2551. This stanza is transposed with the next R. 2554. the] ther B, R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 118 recto.

- ¶ Aftir this deth of Graccus, as I reede,  
 Was chose a tribun callid Munycius,  
 Which fordede the lawes alle in deede 2560  
 Of olde Graccus callid[e] Gayus.  
 But he that was named Tiberius,  
 With help of Flaccus, tribuns of estat,  
 In the Capitoile began a gret debat. 2564
- Thei wer supported bi the comounte,  
 Bi vois of peepel, the woord of no man knowe;  
 For Graccus parti hih upon a tre  
 A trompet stood & proudli gan to blowe, 2568  
 Which slay[e]n was, & fro the tre doun throwe,  
 Bi which[e] slaughtre, the book makth rehearsaile,  
 Graccus\* wex feeble; his parti gan to faille:
- For dred he fledde into the teritorie  
 Of Ianus temple, ran up to a tour. 2572  
 Whan Tiberius, as put is in memorie,  
 Sauh in the cite he hadde no fauour,  
 Disespiered knew no bet socour, 2576  
 Swerd set at brest [in] presence of Mynerue,  
 Fulli purposed afforn hir for to sterue.
- Ther stood on bi & drouh his hand abak;  
 Fro that purpos made hym to declyne. 2580  
 Thus Graccus parti goth day be day to wrak,  
 And Flakkus took the temple of Lucyne, —  
 His sone, his freendis [&] almost al his lyne, —  
 Thei kept them strong; but maugre þer diffence 2584  
 Thei wer ther slayn be sturdi violence.
- Whil Graccus freendis fauht for his partie, [p. 290] Graccus  
 And he hymself constreyned was for\* dred prayed a boy  
 To preye a boy of his cumpanye, among his  
 To take a suerd & smyte[n] of his hed. 2588 followers to  
 Set on a spere with the blood maad red, smite off his  
 Sent it his mooder, compleynyng in hir teene, head, which he  
 Into hir castel that callid was Misseene. 2592 did.
2559. Minucius P. 2560. lawes] lawe H, law R 3.  
 2566. vois] noise H, noyse R 3, H 5 — woord] voice H, vois  
 R 3, voice P.  
 2569. tre] gree H.  
 2571. Graccus] Flaccus B, R, J, R 3, P. Flaccus is corrected to  
 Graccus in H.  
 2577. brest] the brest R, H — in] om. R, H, J, H 5.  
 2582. temple] peepel H.  
 2585. ther] om. H — sturdi] study R. 2587. for] of B, R, J.
- After the death  
 of the second  
 Gracchus,  
 Caius' laws  
 were repealed  
 by Mancinus,  
 and Tiberius  
 and Flaccus  
 revolted,
- supported by  
 the commons,  
 but were forced  
 to flee.
- Tiberius took  
 refuge in the  
 temple of  
 Minerva;
- and Flaccus and  
 his party be-  
 took themselves  
 to the temple  
 of Lucina,  
 where they  
 were slain.
- Gracchus  
 prayed a boy  
 among his  
 followers to  
 smite off his  
 head, which he  
 did.

Thus his  
mother Cornelia  
lost all her  
children, and  
their goods  
were escheated  
to the town.

Namyd Cornelia his moder was in deede,  
Whilom douhtir to grete Scipioun.  
Hir children alle slay[e]n, as I reede,  
And Graccus goodis achetid to the town. 2596

502 of Grac-  
chus' people  
were slain and  
2000 of Flaccus'  
party, of whom  
many were in-  
nocent.

Therof afftir maad a dyuysioun  
Bi iugement thoruhout[e] the cite,  
Wher most was neede among the comounte.  
Of Graccus side fyue hundred slayn & twain\* 2600  
Vpon an hill[e] callid Auentyne.  
And Oppynyus, a consul, dede his peyne  
Of ther conspiryng the ground to serche & myne.  
And Flaccus parti to brynge to ruyne, 2604  
He slouh too thousand bi hasti iuggement,  
Amongis which was many an innocent.

[How the wif of Hastrubal brent hirsilf & hir  
childre.]<sup>1</sup>

John Bochas  
again tells about  
the destruction  
of Carthage,

HEER Iohn Bochas in especiall  
List to remembre how Cartage newe ageyn 2608  
Destroied was, & how [duc] Hasdruball  
Cam to myscheeff; the trouthe was weel seyn.  
Which to reherse of newe it wer but weyn,  
Sith heer-toform is maad cleer menciouñ 2612  
Bothe of ther brennyng & ther destruccioun.

and says that  
Hasdrubal's  
wife preferred  
death to servi-  
tude and burnt  
herself up to-  
gether with her  
young sons.

Sauff heer he tellith how Hastruballis wiff,  
Onli teschewen to lyuen in seruage,  
Ches with hir childe for to lese hir lyff, 2616  
And wilfulli, of furious corage,  
She and hir sonys, tendre & yong of age,  
Among the flawmys & the colis rede  
Consumyd were\* into ashes dede. 2620

Dido, whom  
Æneas betrayed,  
built the city,  
and she too  
burnt herself  
up.

Dido the firste that bilte that cite  
And made touris & the stronge wall,  
Which was betrashed falsly\* of Enee,  
Afforn remembered the fires funerall, — 2624  
And aftir longe the wif of Hasdruball  
Ches rather deie with hir childe tweyne,  
Thañ among Romeyns for to lyue in peyne.

2600. twain] fyue B, R. 2605. too] too tho H.  
2609. duc] om. R, J — Hasdruball] Hanyball H, R 3.  
2615. to] & H. 2618. yong & tendre H.  
2620. were] was B, R, J. 2621. 2nd that] þe H, R 3.  
2623. falsly] also B, R, J.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 118 verso.



[**Off Machabeus Ioathas taken bi the kyng of Surre.**]<sup>1</sup>

**I**N order suyng, vnto Iohn Bochas  
 Ther appeerd an heuy man of siht,  
 Machabeus the worthi Ioathas,  
 Whiche ocupied for wisdam & for myht  
 Offis of prynce, [of] presthod & of kniht;  
 Be title of Iuda of werris took themprise,  
 Be cleyrn of Leuy, as preest dede sacrefise.  
 2628 Jonathan Maccabeus, prince  
 and high priest  
 of Judea,  
 2632  
 The lawe of Iewes manli to diffende  
 With al the Lond[e] of Promyssioun,  
 This Ioathas ful knihtli dede entende  
 Ageyn al enmyes aboute hem enviroun.  
 Til of Surrye the fals[e] kyng Tryphoun  
 Be treynys compassed & promys falsli holde  
 Took Ioathas, of whom riht now I tolde.  
 2636 was taken  
 prisoner by the  
 deceit of Tryphoun,  
 king of Syria.  
 2640  
 Machabeorum is rehersid all,  
 Of his knihtod & his worthynesse,  
 With al the tresouns in especiall  
 Wrouht be Tryphon be many gret falsnesse:  
 His subtil sleightis and his doubilnesse, —  
 Them to reherse, ye gete no mor of me;  
 For in the Bible the stori ye may see.  
 2644 As the whole  
 story is told  
 in the Book of  
 I. Maccabees,  
 you'll get no  
 more of it  
 from me.  
 2648

[**How Demetrius the secounde lost at last his hede.**]<sup>2</sup>

**B**V T I will turne to Demetrius  
 That callid was Demetrius be secounde,  
 Which bi descent cam from Anthiochus,  
 And bi his manhod, as it was weel founde,  
 Dede the pride of kyng Ballas confounde,  
 Callid Alisaundre, which bi gret outrage  
 Hadde putte his fader from his heritage.  
 2652 Demetrius the  
 Second, a de-  
 scendant of An-  
 tiochus, who  
 confounded the  
 pride of Balas,  
 2656 won many  
 victories over  
 the Parthians,  
 but was finally  
 captured by  
 Arsaces.

2636. Promyssioun] punyssioun H. 2637, 41. Ionathas H.  
 2659. veynglorie] victorye H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 118 verso.

<sup>2</sup> MS. leaf J. 118 verso.

- Bi his sleiht fraudis deceptorie, 2660  
 Vndir a shadwe of feynyng & fals cheer  
 Took Demetrius vnwarli prisoneer.
- Arsaces, to his shame, after leading him about Syria in poor array, made him marry his daughter against his will. And to gret sclaudre & hyndryng\* of his name, Arsacides bamaner moquerye 2664  
 Made Demetrius, for despiht & shame,  
 Poorli arraied, of hate & gret envie  
 For to be lad thoruhout al Surrre;  
 Made hym aftir, bi gret auisement, 2668  
 To wedde his douhtir ageyn his owne entent.
- When Arsaces died, Demetrius tried to escape This Demetrius was kept out of pres, [p. 291]  
 That but fewe hadde of hym [a] siht,  
 Vnto tyme that Arsacides 2672  
 Was ded & passed, for al his gret[e] myht.  
 Than he caste tescape away be fliht;  
 And secreli tacomplisshe his entent,  
 He gat hym counsail that was of his assent. 2676
- in disguise, with the help of a knight called Callimandrus; Gallymandrus, a lord of that contre,  
 Which that was of his assent in deede,  
 In ther fliht to keepe hem mor secre  
 Made Demetrius for to chaunge his weede, 2680  
 And preuy weies foorth he dede hym leede.  
 But al for nouht; his fliht was but in veyn,  
 For bi strong pursut he was take ageyn.
- but he was caught and brought back to his wife. After their two children were born, his chain was again loosened, Afftir bi constreynt presentid to the kyng, 2684  
 That he gan wexe weri of his lyff,  
 Kept mor streihtli, folk on hym waityng,  
 And maugre hym presentid to his wiff,  
 With hir tabide ful heuy and pensyff. 2688  
 But whan thei hadde childre atween hem tweyne,  
 To go mor large loosnyd was his cheyne.
- and three times he endeavoured to escape. And thus he hadde space & fre licence  
 To gon and comen at his auantage; 2692  
 For whil his wiff heeld with hym residence,  
 Thei dempte his childre wer suffisaunt hostage.  
 But he was euere vnstable of his corage,  
 With Gallymandrus the forseid[e] kniht 2696  
 Thre tyme take & brouht ageyn be fliht.

2663. hyndryng &amp; sclaudryng B, R, J.

2671. a] om. R, J. 2677. Callimandrus P.

2679. mor] om. H. 2686. awaityng H. 2689. children R.

And for he was so dyuers manyfold,  
 Kyng Fraactes, in tokne he was vnstable,  
 Sent hym thre dees forgid squar of gold,  
 To pleye raket as a child chaungable, —  
 His disposicioun was so variable.

2700 King Phraates,  
 seeing that he  
 was as full  
 of whims as a  
 child, sent him  
 three gold dice  
 to play racket  
 with and locked  
 him up.

But for to restreyn his condicioun,  
 He was efft take & fetrid in prisoun.

2704

But whan Fortune hadde youen hym a pull,  
 Bi many dyuers stra[u]nge aduersite,  
 To punshe hym mor Pharactes wexeth dull.  
 And Demetrius of prisoun was maad free,  
 Ful restored ageyn to his contre,  
 Wex proud ageyn, of newe it is so fall,  
 That he was hated of his lieges all.

2708 But afterwards  
 not wanting to  
 punish him any  
 more, he let  
 him out, at  
 which Demetrius  
 became so  
 inuferable  
 that all his  
 subjects hated  
 him.

Cleopatra, his mooder, that was queen  
 Of al Egypt & wiff to Tholome,  
 Was with hir lord at striff, who list to seen,  
 Which turnid aftir to gret aduersite.

2712 Cleopatra, his  
 mother, was at  
 strife with her  
 husband Euer-  
 getes, and in-  
 duced

But to strengthe hir parti thus wrouht she,  
 Made hir sone for to take on honde  
 For hir to fihte ageyn[es] hir husbonde.

2716 Demetrius to  
 take her side,  
 whereupon  
 Euergetes in-  
 cited Zebina,  
 son of a mer-  
 chant, to lay  
 claim to his  
 kingdom, and,  
 supporting him

But Tholomeus callid Euergetes,  
 Geyn Demetrius diffendyng his contre,  
 Made Zebenna to putte hymself in pres,  
 Sone of a marchaunt, born of low degre,  
 To make a cleyrn bi fals subtilite,  
 Of al Surrye to haue pecessioun,  
 For hym aleggyng title of adopcioun.

2720 with an army,

2724

He to be sone to [old] Anthiochus,  
 Cleymyng therbi the kyngdam of Surrye,  
 Onli texclude the said Demetrius.

2728

And Tholomeus, to susteene the partie  
 Of Zebenna, with al his cheualrie  
 Gadrid in Egypt & contrees enviroyn,  
 Ageyn Demetrius proudli is come doun.

2732

And Fortune with hir double face  
 Caused the cuntre bi rebellious,  
 That Demetrius stood cleene out of grace;  
 Wherbi the people of al that regeoun

2736

drove out De-  
 metrius and,  
 the people  
 willing, made  
 Zebina king

2699. Phraartes P. 2700. dies R, dyes H. 2710. so] no H.

2714. to] om. R. 2719. Euergetes H.

2726. sone] om. H — old] om. R, J.

Wer hool ageyn hym in ther oppynyoun:  
That be Tholomes wonderful werkyng  
Zebenna ther resceyued was as kyng.

of all Syria. Thus Zebenna, bi fals intrusioun, 2740

Of al Surrie was maad[e] lord & kyng;  
Title was ther non, but collusioun,  
Texclude Demetrius bi subtil compassyng.  
Yit as I fynde, his parti defendyng, 2744  
How Demetrius Zebenna gan assaille,  
Ther quarel dareyned with a gret bataille.

Demetrius  
fought him  
again and was  
again defeated,  
and compelled  
to flee to  
Tyre,

Gret peple slay[e]n vpon outhr side,  
Demetrius put from his regeoun 2748  
And ouercomen, for [al] his gret[e] pride,  
At gret myscheeff to his confusioun,  
Hauyng no socour nor consolacioun;  
But with a fewe chose of his meyne 2752  
Fledde be watir to Tیره the cite,

where his head  
was smitten off.

Lik as he wolde haue luyed ther in pes, [p. 292]  
Bi a feynt maner of perfeccioun,  
Withynne the temple of myhti Hercules 2756  
Vnder a shadwe of religioun.

Of what  
use to him  
was his pride?

But sodeynli at his comyng down  
Into Tیره & at his arryuaille,  
His hed smet of; what myht\* his pride [a]vaille! 2760

[How zebenna kyng of Surre bi intrusioun entryng  
had mischeuys endyng.]<sup>1</sup>

Zebina, born  
of low lineage,  
and hardly  
more than a  
beggar, came  
weeping to  
Bochas;

**T**OUCHYNG Zebenna, of whom I spak toforn,  
Poorli brouht up & of louh lynage,  
And of kynreede but a begger born,  
Cam tofor Bochas trist off his visage, 2764  
Sore weepyng, muet of langage,  
Gan compleyne his woful aenture,  
Vnwar & sodeyn, impossible to recure.

2739. as] a R.

2746. Ther] þe H. 2749. al] om. R.

2752. But] om. H.

2753. be] by a H.

2760. His hed smet of] He lost his hede H, R 3, H 5 — myht] dede B.

2765. muet] Inuett H.

2767. & Impossible H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 119 recto.

His condiciouns sumwhat dul & rude,  
 First in pouert, proud & presumptuous,  
 Appechid afftir of gret ingratitude  
 Shewed in his\* lyff to kyng Anthiochus,  
 His firste forthere[r], the stori tellith thus:  
 For which Anthiochus gretli was anoyed,  
 Caste a mene bi whiche he was destroyed.

Ther was a cosyn that callid was Grispus  
 To Anthiochus, & of the same lyne,  
 Which be title off Demetrius  
 Cleymeth as hurry, be many vnkouth signe,  
 To regne in Surrye, & proudli gan maligne  
 Ageyn Zebenna, whos parti to supporte,  
 Stood Anthiochus cheeff, as I can reporte.

This said[e] Grispus, yong & tendre of age,  
 Bi the forthryng & supportacioun  
 Off Anthiochus, hadde in mariage  
 His owne douhtir, with gret pecessioun,  
 That Zebenna, for short conclusioun,  
 Compellid was, for al his grete myht,  
 To Anthioche for to take his flit.

And ther he fill in so gret pouerte,  
 Failed moneye for to paie wages  
 The soudiour[e]s, which in that contre  
 Abide vpon hym of al maner ages,  
 Straunge folk & sondry of langages,  
 Theuys, moordrers, mansle[e]rs & pillours, —  
 First off Iubiter assailynge the tresours

To his disclaundre, perpetuel of memorye,  
 The diffame aroos so manyfold.  
 In Iouis temple the baneer of victorie  
 He took a-way, that was of massiff gold,  
 With a gret ymage which stood ther of old,  
 Of gold also, with othir mo tresours,  
 With which pillage he paid his\* soudiours.

Of sacrilege hauynge no conscience,  
 Tescape away he entrid is the se;  
 But Eolus bi gret[e] violence  
 With wynd & tempest as he dede flee

2768 for after his sudden rise to power he grew proud and was ungrateful to Antiochus,

2772

2776 who, greatly annoyed, turned round and supported the claim of his cousin Grypus to the Syrian throne.

2780

2784 Grypus had married Antiochus' daughter, and Zebina was forced to flee to Antioch,

2788

where he became so poor that he turned robber

2792

2796 and despoiled the temple of Jupiter to pay his men.

2800

2804 Little he cared for sacrilege; but Eolus blew so hard when he tried to sail away, that he was caught

2771. his] this B, R. 2775. Griphus P.  
 2790. wages] his wages H. 2793. folkes R.  
 2799. massy R. 2802. his] the B, R.

- Dede vnto hym ful gret aduersite.  
 And al his meyne forsook hym of entent; 2808  
 And he was take & to Grispus sent,
- and taken to Grypus, who sentenced him to death. Kyng of Surrye, to whom whan he was brouht,  
 Gaff on hym be iuggement this sentence:  
 For sacrilege that he hadde wrouht, 2812  
 Spoillyng templis be gret violence,  
 Doyng to goddis no maner reuerence, —  
 For which Grispus comaundid hath as iuge  
 That he be slayn; ther was no bet refuge. 2816
- Thus he ended a wretch, as he began. Of berthe a boy, clamb up to roial stage,  
 Brouht up of nouht, & set in dignite,  
 Knew nat hymself, wex cruel of corage,  
 Aroos fro pouert to gret prosperite. 2822  
 But thoruh Fortunys mutabilite,  
 That blynde ladi so made hir power stretchche, —  
 As he began, so ended\* as a wrechche.
- Wilfulness, extorted power and covetousness have caused the destruction of many a king. Reknid thestatis of worldli regalie, 2824  
 Noubre of men\*, gold, tresour & richesse,  
 Statli castelis, paleis on ech partie,  
 Conquest bi Fortune clymbyng to hih noblesse,  
 Cruel suerd conveied be wilfulnesse, 2828  
 Poweer extort wip couetise oppressing,  
 Cause destruccioun of many erthli kyng.\*
- But those who know themselves, and although brought up in poverty rise to power through virtue, are worthy to be called sovereigns. But in contrarie, who list hymself to knowe,  
 And is be grace enclyned to meeknesse, 2832  
 Thouh he fro pouert in streihtnesse brouht up lowe  
 And is be vertu reised to worthynesse,  
 With sceptre of pes & suerd of rihtwisnesse  
 Indifferentli his doomys demenyng, — 2836  
 Such oon is able to be cleped a kyng.
- Envy, flattery, and deceit endanger the welfare of princes and have been the occasion of many a tragedy. What is cheef cause, grounde & occasioun [p. 293]  
 That princis ofte stonde in iupartie  
 Of worldli chaungis in soch dyuysioun, 2840  
 Regnyng among hem the serpent of envie,  
 Symulacioun, feynyng, flaterie,  
 The sooth out serched, who-so list to look,  
 Be many tragedie expert in this book. 2844

2822. hir] his H.

2823. so ended] to eenden B, to enden R, J, R 3.

2825. men] meyne B, R, J, P, H 5, R 3. 2826. on] in H

2830. Cause] Causeth R, J, P — kyng] thyng B, R.

[How Bitynctus kyng of Auergnatis bi the Romayns  
was taken and deied in prisoun.]<sup>1</sup>

**B**YTINCTUS next, of Auergnatis kyng,  
Cam tofor Bochas gynnyng his compleynt,  
Of his distresse the ordre rehersyng,  
And how that he was maad feeble & feynt, 2848  
Ageyn the Romeyns myscheuousli atteynt,  
Natwithstandyng, to meynteene his quarell  
He cast of pride ageyn hem to rebell.  
But it is first put in remembraunce, 2852 and despised  
How Auergnatis is a nacioun their lordship.  
Hangyng on Gaule, longyng\* vnto Fraunce,  
Of which Bytynct stood in pociessioun,  
Hauyng despiht in his oppynyoun 2856  
To the Romeyns any wise tobeie,  
But proudli caste ageyn hem to werreie.  
His labour was to stonden in fraunchise  
And been at large from ther subieccioun. 2860  
Gan of pride ther lordshipe to despise,  
Gadred peepke of presumpcioun,  
Whom for to meete Fabius was sente down, 2864  
A myhti consul, which knihtli took on honde  
For that parti Bituitus to withstonde.  
Of whos comyng Bituitus took disdeyn,  
Because the folk which Fabius dide leede  
Wer but fewe; & whan he hath hem seyn, 2868  
He seide of scorn: "this peepke, who taketh heede,  
May nat suffise myn houndis for to feede  
Whan thei be slayn; to fewe thei been in noumbre,  
With multitude that I shal hem encoumbre." 2872  
An hundred thousand in his vaunwarde he hadde, 2876  
That passe sholde of Auuerne\* the ryueer;  
And foure score thousand beside that he ladde.  
The consul Fabius mette hym with good cheer  
Whan he was passid of Rodamus the daunger, 2876  
Fauht al the day til it drouh to niht;  
The Romeyns wan; ther foon wer put to fliht.

Bituitus, king  
of the Auver-  
gnians, rebelled  
against the  
Romans

A consul  
named Fabius  
was sent  
against him  
with a small  
force,

which Bituitus  
scorned, saying  
that there were  
not enough of  
them to feed  
his dogs.

However, the  
Romans won

2845. Bytinctus] Bituitus P (*ibroughout*).

2846. begynnyng H. 2854. longyng] longeth B, J, R.

2855. Bityntus H, Bityng R 3, Bytyng H 5.

2859. stonden] stoden H. 2873. vauntwarde H.

2874. Auuerne] Auuerner B, Auuerneer R, J, awuerne H, R 3,

Auuerne P. 2877. Rhodamus P. 2879. wer] was H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 119 verso.

and killed  
50,000 of his  
men.  
Bituitus was  
taken prisoner  
and died in  
chains.

At the ryuer, lik as seith the book, 2880  
Ther wer drownid & brouht to myschaunce  
Fiffti thousand, as thei the watir took,  
Thoruh Fortunys froward variaunce.  
And bi a treyne, tencres of his greuaunce, 2884  
Bituitus take was of the Romeyns,  
Dampnid to prysoun ther to deye in cheyns.

[How the tiraunt Euergetes weddid queen Cleopatras  
slouh hir eldist son, exilid his wif, weddid hir  
douhter.]<sup>1</sup>

Queen Cleo-  
patra, daughter  
of Ptolemy  
Epiphanes,  
next came  
before Bochas,  
her white  
cheeks stream-  
ing with blood  
and tears.

AFFTIR whos fall, pitous\* to reede & seen, 2888  
Off Epiphanes\* the grete Tholome  
Cam the douhtir, Cleopatras be queen,  
Gan compleyne hir gret aduersite.  
Hir furious sorwe diffacid hir beute,  
Hir cheekis white, of blood & teris meynt, 2892  
Rent with hir handis, wer pitousli bespreynt.

She was the  
wife of Philo-  
meter and had  
two sons, and  
after the death  
of her husband  
married Euer-  
getes,

To Philometer she weddid was afforn,  
Whilom sone to Tholome the kyng;  
And bi hir lord, in trewe wedlok born, 2896  
Too sonys she hadde, as be olde writyng.  
Afftir whos deth anon vp[on] suyng,  
To Euergetes, a prince yong of age,  
She was ageyn ioyned in mariage. 2900

who became  
king by her  
title and, like  
a tiger, slew  
her eldest son  
on their wed-  
ding day.

Be title of hir in Egipt lord & sire,  
Kyng of that lond, cruel & despitous,  
Whos stori sheweth no kyngdam nor empire 2904  
May of themsilff make no man vertuuous;  
For lik a tigre this tiraunt furious,  
Hir eldest sone, day of ther mariage,  
Born to been heir, he slouh of mortal rage.

Later on he  
drove her from  
Egipt and

Nat aftir longe this extort cruelte, 2908  
Al-be thei hadde childre atween hem tweyne,  
Out of Egipt he made hir for to flee,  
And of malis gan at hir disdeyne.

2885. Bitinctus R, Bytyntus H, Bitinctus J, Bituitus P.

2887. pitous] pitousli B, pitously R, J.

2888. Epiphones B, J.

2898. anon vpon] anon vp R, J, R 3, P, vpon anoon H,  
anoon vpon H 5.

2903. empire] *Emperour* R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 119 verso.



I trowe she hadde mateer for to pleyne!  
He took hir douhtir whan that she was gon,  
Ageyn nature, & weddid hire anon.

2912 married her  
daughter  
against nature.

She callid was Cleopatras also;  
But Euergetes, to shewe hym mor vengable  
Ageyn hir mooder, that was fro Egipt go,  
The cite which was to hir fauourable  
The peep<sup>le</sup> exiled, he, wood & vntretable,  
In hir despiht[e] gaff that noble tou<sup>n</sup>  
Of hatful malis to straunge nacioun.

2916 He also exiled  
the people of a  
city that was  
favourable to  
her,

But whan he knew[e] thoruh his cruel deedis [p. 294]  
And gan conceyue how he was coupable,  
Sauh ageyn hym the manyfold hatreedis  
And conspiracioun<sup>s</sup> of statis honourable,  
He at large to be mor vengable,  
Geyn Cleopatras to gynne an vnkouth striff,  
Wente into exil with his newe wiff.

2920

2924 and when he  
realized how  
unpopular he  
had made him-  
self, he went  
2924 into voluntary  
exile with his  
new wife in  
order to be  
the more free  
to wreak his  
vengeance on  
Cleopatra.  
2928

Gadred people his olde wiff tassaille,  
On hir childre to shewe mor vengeance,  
A day assigned, heeld with hir bataille:  
But which of hem was dryuen to vttraunce,  
Myn auctour pleynli put nat in remembraunce.  
But suyng after, thus of hym I reede,  
How of malis he wrouhte a cruel deede,

I do not know  
which of them  
won when they  
joined battle;

Which to reherse is nouth<sup>er</sup> good nor fair  
But terrible & abhomynable:  
He dismembred hir sone & his heir  
On pecis smale, this tiraunt most vengable.  
And whan the moodir sat at hir roial table,  
With bodi & hed, at a solempnite,  
Leet hir be serued of froward cruelte.

2932

2936 but Euergetes  
dismembered  
her son and  
served him up  
to her at table.

Wheroff al Egipt hadde indignacioun;  
And for tauenge this cruel gret outrage  
Thei took his platis, basnet, haberioun,  
And his cotearmour wrouht of gret costage,  
Fro ther templis rent out his image,  
In tokne he was a tiraunt most atteynt,  
Ech thyng diffacid that was of hym depeynt.

2940

2944 At this the  
Egyptians  
rose in indig-  
nation and  
threw his  
armour and  
statues out of  
the temples.

2948

2915. Cleopatra P.

2929. olde] new H, R 3, newe H 5. 2938. his] hir H, R 3, H 5.

2942. froward] hatefull H, hateful R 3, H 5.

2944. this] his R — gret] om. R.

Bochas wrote no more of his hateful story, nor of Cleopatra; for he did not want to disfigure his book.

Whos hatful story, repleet of wrechchydnesse,  
 Ful of vengauce & froward myscheeuys, —  
 Therefore I deeme Bochas list nat expresse 2952  
 Mor of his lyff, fulfilled of al repreuys;  
 Off Cleopatra writ nat the fynal greeuys  
 In this chapitle, what fatal weie she took,  
 List the mateer sholde difface his book. 2956

[How Iugurta by\* intrusioun of Munedy Kyng  
 slouh rightful heires and aftir himsilf was  
 drowned.]<sup>1</sup>

After Cleopatra, Jugurtha, the manly man, told his tale to Bochas. He was subtile of wit but took his plighted word lightly.

**A**FFTIR this woful dedli auenture  
 Off Cleopatras, whos stori is ful old,  
 Cam Iugurta, be manli man, to lure,  
 And to Iohn Bochas hath his tale told 2960  
 Of his conquestis & deedis manyfold;  
 Subtil off wit, & as myn auctour seith,  
 Gaff litil force for to breke his feith.

Masinissa, his uncle, had a son called Micipsa, who was his heir;

But in ordre the stori to conveie 2964  
 Of Iugurta & of his kynreede, —  
 Masmysa kyng of Munedie, soth to seie,  
 His vnkle was; & also, as I reede,  
 The seid[e] kyng hadde a sone in deede, 2968  
 Callid Misipsa, eldest be writyng,  
 Aftir his day born\* to regne as kyng.

and after Masinissa had deprivd Jugurtha of the right of succession because he was a bastard, and Micipsa became king on his father's death, he was very friendly to Jugurtha.

This Masmysa ordeyned aftirward,  
 Toform his deth, off hool entencioun, 2972  
 Because Iugurta was born a bastard,  
 To depruye [hym] off al successioun,  
 In his testament; but in conclusioun,  
 His sone Misipsa, aftirward maad kyng, 2976  
 Was to Iugurta freendli & louyng.

Micipsa had two sons, Adherbal and Hiempsal,

Misipsa hadde too sonys, as I fynde;  
 The ton of hem callid Herbales,  
 The seconde, the stori maketh mynde,\* 2980  
 Was that tyme namyd Hiempsales.

2956. difface shulde H, R 3, H 5.

2958. Cleopatra P. 2959. Jugurtha P.

2966. Masinissa P — Numedye R 3, Numedy P.

2969. Micipsa H, P. 2970. born to] for to B, R, om. J, P.

2978. Micipsa H, R 3, P.

2979. Herbales] Harbales R, Adherbales P.

2980. mynde] menciou B, R, J.

2981. Hyempsales H, Hiempsales P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 120 recto; by] of by J.

- With whom Iugurta put hymself in pres,  
 For tabide & duelle in speciall,  
 Lik as ther cosyne in ther court roiall. 2984
- Cherished ful weel because that he was wis  
 And riht likli of disposicioun,  
 Chose afftirward for a synguler pris  
 To gon to Spaigne to helpe Scipioun 2988  
 Geyn Numentaynes, a famous myhti toun.  
 And ther Iugurta so knihtli hath begonne,  
 That bi his noblesse the toun anon was wonne.
- And to remembre his knihthod of entent,  
 His worthynesse & his hih renoun,  
 To Micipsa lettres wer doune sent 2992  
 Bi the forseid worthi Scipioun;  
 Which gaff so gret a comendacioun 2996  
 To Iugurta, hym callyng in that werre  
 Of manli prowesse the yong[e] lodesterre.
- Off kyng Micipsa receyued notabli,  
 Callid hym sone bi adopcioni; 3000  
 The kyng ded soone, Iugurta traitourli  
 Slouh Hiemsales, heir be successioun,  
 He of that rewme to haue pcesseoun.  
 This was his custum, how-euer his\* title stood, 3004  
 Bi slauhtre & moordre for to gete good.
- He list to goddis do no reuerence,  
 Of his nature wilful & rekles, [p. 295] He was a reck-  
 Hauyng nouter remors nor conscience 3008 less, irreverent  
 Touchyng the slauhtre of Hiemsales, man without  
 Falsli practised for his owne ences. remorse or con-  
 For which[e] moordre Romeyns han sent doune 3012 science.  
 A consuleer to doon correccioun,
- Calpurnyus callid, that was sent  
 Onli to pun[ys]he that horrible deede;  
 But with tresour his eien wer so blent,  
 Of execusioun that he took non heede. 3016  
 The Romeyn[e]s ouercome with meede

with whom  
 Jugurtha  
 dwelt.

Afterwards he  
 went to Spain  
 and won the  
 town of  
 Numantia

and was  
 highly com-  
 mended by  
 Scipio.

Micipsa called  
 him his adopted  
 son; but when  
 he died Jugur-  
 tha slew Hiem-  
 sales to get  
 possession of  
 the realm  
 himself.

He was a reck-  
 less, irreverent  
 man without  
 remorse or con-  
 science.

As a result of  
 this murder,  
 Calpurnius  
 was sent down  
 to punish him,  
 but Jugurtha  
 bought him off.

2983. especiall H.

2989-91 are replaced by the three last lines of the next stanza, the rest of which is omitted H.

2989. Mumentaynes R, J, Namantines P.

2997. callyng] clepyng H. 3004. 2nd his] the B, R, J, P.

3006. He] who H. 3009. Hyempsales H.

3017. ouercome] touercome R.

- Gaff to Iugurta, bi collusioun,  
Off this moordre a coloured fals pardoun.
- and next proceeded to the murder of Adherbal, Bi which he took a maner hardynesse 3020  
Of tiranȳe in hym weel exercised,  
Gadred peepel, of hatful cursidnesse,  
And in hymself gan crueli deuise  
Texecute the silue same guise 3024  
Of fals[e] moordre, — I meene now non othir, —  
To slen Herbales, the seconde brothir,
- causing great alander and defame. That he allone bi fals intrusioun  
Of Numedie myhte be lord & kyng. 3028  
Thus of his cruelte, moordre & fals tresoun  
The noise was born by langage & wrytyng,  
Of which the griffis, falsli abrod spreedyng,  
Brouht[e] foorth in hyndryng of his name 3032  
Frut of disclaundre & report of diffame.
- Although he covered his treason under flowers and spent his treasure freely on the Senate, the commons rebelled, Mortal tresoun was curid vndir flours,  
To saue hymself bi sum subtilite, 3036  
And speciali with his gret tresours  
Tappese the senat, yiff it wolde ha bee;  
But ther ageyn[e]s al the comounte  
Made ageyn hym a coniuracioun,  
On his fals moordre to do correccioun. 3040
- and 4000 men were sent from Rome under Atilius, a praetor, who looked for a bribe, Foure thousand men of armys wer douȳ sent  
With a pretour Icallid Actilius;  
The which[e] pretour sette al his entent  
To gadre tresour; for he was coueitous: 3044  
And couetise is contrarious  
Vnto knihthod, as auctours alle expresse,  
And stepmooder vnto worthynesse.
- and after laying siege to the tower in which Jugurtha kept his wealth and being defeated, came to terms, to his great shame. A siege he leide aboute a myhti tour, 3048  
Wheryn Iugurta put al his richesse.  
The siege was leid for loue of that tresour  
Mor than for worshepe or for worthynesse;  
Wherbi he loste his name & his noblesse. 3052  
Ther discounfited, brouht vnto myschaunce,  
Afftir for meede made his alliaunce

3023. gan] hath R 3 — crueli] cursidli J, R, cursedly P —  
deuise] devised H, deuysid R 3, deuysede, H 3.  
3026. Herbales R, Adherbal P. 3030. &] & bi R, J.  
3042. callid R, called P — Atilius P, Aulyus H, R 3.  
3049. Wheryn] wheron H.

With Iugurta, to his ences of shame,  
 Caused Affrik thoruh fals[e] cheuisaunce,  
 Thei togidre disclaundrid be diffame,  
 Them to withdrawe fro thobeissaunce  
 Of the Romeyns; & mor themsilff tauaunce,  
 To ther purpos, coruptid with tresour  
 Many tribun & many senatour.

3056 Allying himself  
with Jugurtha,  
he bribed  
right and left,

3060

Of newe ageyn, al the comounte  
 Fro Roome sente Gayus Marrius,  
 For the moordres & horrible cruelte  
 Wrouht bi Iugurta, the tiraunt furious.  
 Which to refourme the said Gayus,  
 A consuler, of purpos was sent down,  
 A manli knyht & famous of renoun.

3064 until Gaius  
Marius came  
down from  
Rome to  
set matters  
straight.

3068

Ful notabli the werris he began,  
 Wrouht euery thyng of hih[e] prouidence;  
 And Fortune, which helpeth hardi man,  
 Gaff hym gret fauour bi hir influence.  
 And aldirfirst he dede his dilligence  
 From hym tauoide al that wer vicious,  
 Delicat people & folkis lecherous.

3072 At first he was  
virtuous and  
succeeded, and  
kept vicious  
people away  
from him.

A day was set & taken of bataille;  
 But\* Iugurta bi fals subtilite  
 Proffreth gret good, which myht[e] nat auaille,  
 To haue corupt, yif it wolde haue be,  
 The said Marius; but euer in o degre  
 He stood ay stable, vpriht as a wall,  
 And took non heed to his proffre attall.

3076 Jugurtha offered  
him bribes in  
vain,

3080

Than Iugurta, in parti disespeired,  
 Gretly astonid withyne hymself musyng,  
 Ful\* lik a man hyndred & appeired,  
 He gan purpose anon a newe thyng:  
 Of Mauritayne he wente to the kyng  
 To gete helpe, which callid was Boccus,  
 Hym to socoure ageyn[es] this Gayus.

3084 and in despera-  
tion allied him-  
self with Boc-  
chus, king of  
Mauretania.

3088

3058. fro] for R.

3061. 2nd many] many a H.

3063. Caius P. 3067. Consull H. 3073. aldirlast H.

3074. hym] om. R. 3075. folkis] folkes þat wer H.

3077. But] Bi B.

3083. disespeired R.

3085. Ful] But B, R, J, P.

3089, 98, 104 Gayus] Marius P.

Bochus soon  
repented,

Tween hem was maad of newe an alliaunce, [p. 296]  
The whiche laste but a litil space;  
For kyng Boccus gan falle in repentaunce, 3092  
Caste he wolde resorte to the grace  
Off the Romeyns & no mor trespace.  
And to parfourme this entencioun,  
He made to Gayus this mediacioun: 3096

and through  
Sulla's  
mediation be-  
trayed Jugurtha  
and sent him  
prisoner to  
Marius.

Ther was oon Scilla, callid a questour,  
Of Gayus hoost[e] hadde gouernaunce;  
For kyng Boccus he was mediatour,  
That ther was new[e]li accordaunce 3100  
Tween hym & Gayus; & bi the purciaunce  
Off this Boccus Iugurta anon was hent,  
Maugre his myht, & to Gayus sent.

His kingdom  
again became  
tributary to  
Rome; the  
people were  
forgiven;

And al his kyngdam withoute resistence 3104  
Geyn to Romeyns cam vnder obeissaunce.  
And Marius forgaff them ther offence,  
Resceyueth hem vndir assuraunce,  
That he shal nat be doom do no vengauce, 3108  
To punshe the trespacis which thei dede afforn,  
The space acountid fro tyme thei wer born.

but Jugurtha  
almost went  
mad with  
anger, and the  
Romans threw  
him into the  
Tiber bound to  
a stone for his  
treason.

Iugurta taken, almost for anger mad,  
Brouhte to Roome & fetrid in prisoun, 3112  
To Tarpeia an hih hill he was lad,  
Iugement youe for his fals tresoun,  
Bounde to a ston & aftir throwe doun  
Fro the place, ful hih[e] ther he stood, 3116  
Withoute merci into Tibre flood.

## [Lenuoye.]

This may well  
be called a  
tragedy, for it  
began in joy  
and ended in  
adversity.

**T**HIS may be weel callid a tragedie,  
Be discrapioun takyng auctorite;  
For tragedie, as poetes spesephie, 3120  
Gynneth with ioie, eendith with aduersite:  
From hih estat [men] cast in low degre,  
Exauple taken, this story seyn ariht,  
Of Iugurta, that was first a good kniht. 3124

Jugurtha was  
at first a good  
knight, but he  
became covetous

At his gynnyng famous in cheualrie,  
Gat Numentaigne, of Spaigne a gret cite;  
But in repeiryng hom to that partie, —

3109. toforn H. 3115. a doun H.  
3122. men] om. R, J, P — men cast] castith men H, R 3, cast  
men H 5. 3127. to that partie] to his Contr H.

<p>I meene whan he cam hom to his contre, —                  He chaunged knihthod into cruelte,                  With couetise so bleendid was the* siht                  Of Iugurta, that was first a good kniht.</p> <p>His witte, his poweer he hooli dede applie                  To hatful moordre, fraude &amp; subtilite,                  Bextort title hymself to magnefie                  Slouh rihtful heires, refft hem ther liberte,                  Bi fals intrusioun clamb up to ther see,                  And gaff no fors, wher it wer wrong or riht,                  A thyng contrary to eueri worthi kniht.</p> <p>Noble Princis, lefft up your hertis eye,                  Withyne your-silff remembreth &amp; doth see                  Off this moordre[r] the hatful tirannye,                  With oppressiouns doon to the comounte:                  His gynnynge good; a cursid eende had he.                  Moordre crieth vengauunce day &amp; niht,—                  A thyng contrary to eueri worthi kniht.</p>	<p>3128</p> <p>3132 and a murderer                  who slew right-                  ful heirs and                  cared not                  whether it were                  right or wrong.</p> <p>3136</p> <p>3140 Noble Princes,                  remember that                  murder cries                  ever vengeance                  and leads to                  a cursed end.</p> <p>3145</p>
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¶ **Explicit liber quintus.**

¶ **Incipit liber vj<sup>tus</sup>.**

3128 is omitted in H.  
 3130. the] his B, R, J. 3133. fraude mordre H.  
 3141. moordrer] moorder P, J, R, R 2, H, H 4, moordir Sl, H 3,  
 moordyr H 5, morder Add.  
 3143. good] was good R.











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